



Security Council

Fifty-fifth Year

4113th Meeting

Wednesday, 15 March 2000, 10.30 a.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Mársico
	Canada	Mr. Angell
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hain
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Angola

Letter dated 10 March 2000 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning the situation in Angola addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2000/203)



The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

The President: I acknowledge with great pleasure the presence among us of Mr. Peter Hain, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, and I welcome him.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Angola

Letter dated 10 March 2000 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning the situation in Angola addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2000/203)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Angola, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Morocco, Rwanda, South Africa, Togo and Zambia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I welcome Mr. João Bernardo de Miranda, Minister for External Relations of Angola.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. De Miranda (Angola) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Sychoy (Belarus), Mr. Adam (Belgium), Mr. Sotirov (Bulgaria), Mr. Tiendrébéogo (Burkina Faso), Mr. Snoussi (Morocco), Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa), Mr. Kpotsra (Togo) and Mr. Kasanda (Zambia) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them a letter dated 10 March 2000 from the Chairman of the Security

Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning the situation in Angola addressed to the President of the Security Council, document S/2000/203, transmitting the final report of the Panel of Experts established by the Security Council pursuant to resolution 1237 (1999) of 7 May 1999.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2000/200, which contains the text of a letter dated 8 March 2000 from Uganda.

I call on Mr. Robert Fowler, Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning the situation in Angola.

Mr. Fowler (spoke in French): Thank you for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the report of the Panel of Experts on violations of the Security Council sanctions against UNITA. I am particularly glad that the Minister for External Relations of Angola, Mr. João Bernardo de Miranda, has been able to attend the meeting today.

The Panel has produced a consensus report which I highly commend to the Council. It is, I think, an outstanding product, despite the very short time the Panel members had to produce it. I extend my thanks to the Panel, three members of which are with me today: Ambassador Anders Möllander, the Chairman; Colonel Tiroyamodimo, the Vice-Chairman; and Mr. Stanlake Samkange, the Rapporteur.

The Panel was created pursuant to the Council's resolution 1237 (1999) of 7 May 1999. This was the first time the Council created a body of this kind. The Group's mandate was to collect information on how the Council's sanctions against UNITA were being violated and on those responsible for these violations, and to offer recommendations on how these sanctions might be made to work. The Panel has done just that with regard to each of the five areas of the sanctions regime implemented since 1993: the prohibition on the sale or supply of weapons and related material and other forms of military assistance to UNITA; the prohibition against the sale or supply of petroleum and petroleum products to UNITA; the seizing of bank accounts and other financial assets of UNITA; the sanctions against representation abroad and travel by the UNITA leadership and the adult members of their immediate families; and lastly, the prohibition on the sale or export of diamonds by UNITA.

As the Panel's report makes clear in paragraph 2, the underlying objective of the sanctions is to foster a durable political settlement to the civil war in Angola by limiting UNITA's ability to pursue its objectives by military means. If these recommendations are acted upon, this report will have a real and substantial impact on UNITA's ability to wage war by reducing its revenues, increasing its costs and choking off its supply. The Panel's recommendations stand to thwart Mr. Savimbi's plans to take through force of arms what he was denied by Angola's voters eight years ago — if, that is, the Council acts on this report with the same clear-eyed purpose and sense of responsibility that informed the work of the Expert Panel.

The Security Council has repeatedly declared that UNITA, led by Jonas Savimbi, is the principal cause of the resumption of Angola's civil war. More than a million Angolans have lost their lives during this 30-year war. Two hundred more die each day. It is a brutal and odious war in which the principal victims are innocent civilians. Five out of six Angolans alive today have never known peace and have never experienced what virtually everyone in this room understands to be a normal existence. There is not a person, a building, an enterprise or an institution in Angola which has not been damaged by this horrible war. Indeed, UNICEF tells us that Angola is the worst country in the world in which to be a child.

Humanitarian agencies and human rights observers, who have access only to the outer edge of the human catastrophe unfolding in Angola, offer terrifying data suggesting that as much as a third of Angola's beleaguered population is internally displaced. In this connection, I am very grateful to Mr. Holbrooke for focusing this Council's attention on the issue of persons internally displaced within their own country. Most Angolans do not even have the option of fleeing across borders. The horror in Angola is far worse than even these terrible statistics indicate. It is, however, both possible and necessary for the Council to respond and finally change the situation. This report offers us a clear design for doing so.

The war has undermined Angola's bright prospects for development and continues to undermine good governance. It persistently threatens to further destabilize neighbouring countries. Our priority must be to end this war soon. Sanctions alone cannot do this, but they can contribute significantly to creating conditions conducive to stopping this war once and for all.

(spoke in English)

Security Council sanctions against UNITA have not worked well. More than a few people I have encountered in my travels as Committee Chairman have accused me of idealism in suggesting that these sanctions were ever intended to have any real impact. Many regarded their imposition as a political gesture on which the Council had little intention of following through. The result has been not only a culture of impunity regarding the violation of Security Council sanctions, but also a massive failure even to communicate the activities covered by sanctions and an imperfect understanding of what they were intended to achieve.

Mr. Savimbi, however, was one of the few who did understand both the scope and purpose of these sanctions, and he took methodical and far-sighted action to neutralize their impact by systematically establishing a variety of overlapping supply systems and by purchasing friends and facilitators in a number of countries and within the international arms bazaar, the diamond market and among rogue air services. As sanctions began to bite, Mr. Savimbi adapted his plans, constantly jinking and twisting to thwart — until recently, very successfully — the objectives of the sanctions regime.

This excellent report chronicles how Mr. Savimbi was able to do this — how diamonds were used to buy arms, and how inadequate arms export control regimes, largely in Eastern Europe, coupled with the secretive practices and opaque operations of the international diamond market and the advent of ample and freewheeling "pirate" air services in the post-cold-war era, combined to provide UNITA with just-in-time deliveries of state-of-the-art weaponry. The report highlights the fact that these all-too-willing suppliers of services could not have provided Mr. Savimbi with the wherewithal he needed without the active support of some foreign Governments, sometimes at the highest level.

The report further notes that despite the meticulous, specific prohibitions against access to the outside world, many officials — mostly in Western capitals — have continued to allow UNITA's representatives to lobby Governments and the media. Other Governments have continued to extend warm welcomes to members of Savimbi's extended family and those of his senior lieutenants, opening their schools and universities and issuing residence permits and travel documents — specifically contrary to measures imposed by the Council

to deny UNITA's leadership these precious benefits of international legitimacy and acceptance.

The report does name names, including, in a few instances, at the highest level. This, of course, makes everyone nervous, because, frankly, it has not been done. Some, it is claimed, are beyond criticism. However, African leaders, at their Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit meeting in Algiers last July, set, I believe, a new standard for acceptable behaviour, one designed to ensure that the "African renaissance" takes root and flourishes. I doubt that such findings would have been possible without such a brave and unequivocal signal, and I salute the leadership of the OAU for setting the stage for such a report.

As was made clear by the Panel in paragraph 99, violations did not occur along clear geographical, ideological or linguistic lines — a fact fully reflected in the body of the report. Sanctions busting was not limited to any particular region or subregion.

Panel members visited almost 30 countries over a six-month period and amassed a very large body of information from a very wide variety of sources. The Panel reported only information that had been confirmed or corroborated by more than one source in which its members had confidence. As a result of the Panel's unwillingness to use information that was not so corroborated, the information contained in the report is less detailed than would have been the case had a less rigorous standard been applied.

The Panel offers 39 recommendations, all of which strike me, as Chairman, as being realistic and achievable. Some are essentially procedural; others are more complex. Among the most challenging for us, I suspect, will be those recommendations that would have the Council apply sanctions against leaders and Governments found to have been deliberately and methodically violating the sanctions against UNITA. The recommendations propose means through which this might be done, including the imposition of an embargo on arms sales to named countries for a period of three years — the first recommendation — and the imposition of visa requirements and the revocation of special travel privileges on the nationals of countries that enable UNITA to flout restrictions on travel by its senior members and their immediate families; that is recommendation 22. The Panel also proposes, in recommendation 37, a ban on the holding of United Nations or other international governmental conferences in countries deemed to be in breach of these sanctions, and it

further recommends that such countries not be elected to senior positions within the United Nations system or as chairman-in-office of any international or regional organization.

In the area of weapons and military assistance, recommendation 2 would have Governments register, license and monitor the activities of arms brokers and make relevant information available to international organizations seeking to curtail illicit arms transfers. Recommendation 4 would provide for the mandatory authentication and reconciliation of all end-user certificates, and recommendation 3 would encourage the destruction of surplus arms. The Panel supports the idea advanced by Ukraine of bringing together Eastern European suppliers of arms with a view to formulating concrete proposals on how best to stem the illicit flow of arms from this region into Angola, and it recommends that representatives of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) be included in these discussions.

Unfortunately, in the time available, the Panel was not able to learn more about how precisely and from where the international arms merchants hired by UNITA were able to obtain such a large range of sophisticated weaponry. The report chronicles how Mr. Savimbi bought end-user certificates from friendly Governments, through which those arms dealers were able to fill their orders. But there are still some important missing links between these bureaucratic niceties and the decisions we all know must have occurred within some of the manufacturing and exporting countries — and the motivations behind such decisions — which led to the release of such lethal material, with or without a credible paper trail.

From my perspective, this ought to be a principal focus of any decision we might take in the Security Council to pursue our monitoring efforts, and I commend to the Council, in this regard, the recommendation of the Government of Ukraine and of the Panel to convene the conference I mentioned earlier with respect to arms-exporting countries to determine how the supply of arms to UNITA might be better curtailed.

With respect to petroleum and petroleum products, recommendation 8 calls for the monitoring of the border areas adjacent to Angola, and recommendation 9 calls for the institutionalization of information-exchange mechanisms among oil companies and Governments to facilitate the flow of information regarding possible illegal diversions of fuel. The creation within SADC of

an ad hoc committee is proposed in this regard. In recommendation 10 the Panel recommends that a DNA-type analysis be conducted for the purpose of determining the origin of fuel obtained or captured from UNITA.

By recommendation 11 the Panel also calls for the implementation of tighter internal controls within Angola, as well as, by recommendation 12, for the stricter application and enforcement by Governments of air safety regulations regarding the transport of fuel and other hazardous commodities by air.

With reference to diamonds, under recommendation 13 the Panel proposes forfeiture where the legal origin of rough diamonds cannot be established by the possessor and, by recommendation 14, for the imposition by Governments of restrictions — including blacklisting and criminal action — on individuals and enterprises found to be intentionally breaking relevant United Nations sanctions. In particular, in recommendation 16 the Panel recommends that dealing in undeclared rough diamonds be made a criminal offence in countries hosting important diamond-marketing centres. In addition, in recommendation 17 the Panel recommends that a conference of experts be convened to establish a system of controls that would allow for increased transparency and accountability in the control of diamonds from the source of origin to the bourses — including the development of mechanisms for identifying, within diamond markets, those stones that may have reached diamond centres without a customs declaration, and the establishment of a comprehensive database on diamond characteristics and trends. The Panel also calls upon the diamond industry itself to develop and implement more effective arrangements to ensure that its members worldwide abide by the relevant sanctions against UNITA. That is recommendation 18.

With regard to finances and assets, the Panel recommends that Member States make provision for the forfeiture of UNITA-controlled assets the provenance of which cannot be traced to a lawful source. By recommendation 19 the seized and forfeited assets should, in the main, be used to benefit the people of Angola. However, under recommendation 20, as an incentive, a substantial bounty should be offered to any institution, non-governmental organization or individual that traces, tracks down and identifies UNITA assets that are subject to sanction. Further, in recommendation 21 the Panel recommends that banking procedures be developed to facilitate the identification of individuals covered by sanctions and the freezing of assets.

With reference to travel and representation, Governments that have issued passports to UNITA officials and members of their families are called upon now to revoke them and to report to the Committee in this regard. That is recommendation 23. Governments are also called upon to review carefully the status of senior UNITA officials and representatives residing in the countries concerned. That is recommendation 25. In recommendation 26 the Panel also calls for the updating of the list of UNITA members subject to Council-imposed sanctions, for the expansion of the information contained therein, and for the addition to that list of known official or unofficial UNITA representatives abroad.

More generally, in recommendation 28 the Panel recommends that SADC consider introducing mobile radar systems that can be rapidly deployed in the subregion for the purpose of detecting illegal supply flights across national borders, and in recommendation 29 that SADC give consideration to the establishment of an air traffic regime for the control of regional airspace. The Panel calls on the international community to provide assistance to SADC to implement these recommendations.

The Panel calls on Member States geographically close to Angola to take immediate steps to enforce, strengthen or enact legislation making it a criminal offence under domestic law for their citizens or other individuals operating on their territory to violate Council-imposed sanctions against UNITA. In addition, in recommendation 31 the Panel recommends that Member States involved in the supply of arms to African countries more generally also take steps, where they have not already done so, and that the enforcement of such measures be made a high law-enforcement priority. The report specifies that pilots prosecuted for sanctions busting should face permanent loss of certification, as well as incarceration. In addition, the Panel's recommendation 24 calls for a warrant to be issued for the arrest of a particular UNITA officer central — extremely central — to UNITA's supply operations and urges that this be a top international law-enforcement priority.

The report offers guidance on the management of sanctions more generally — for instance, calling for the establishment of formal links and regular collaboration between the United Nations and regional and other organizations involved in sanctions-monitoring and enforcement activities, including Interpol. That is recommendation 32. In recommendation 33 the Panel

recommends that a "Sanctions Information Package", including a Web site, be developed to increase awareness of the scope and purpose of particular packages of sanctions and to facilitate access to relevant information on the part of national and international bodies.

It is clear that these sanctions are beginning to be taken more seriously and, more important, that they are beginning to work. The credible testimony of a number of former senior UNITA officers — notwithstanding the views of some former comrades-in-arms of Mr. Savimbi — suggest that, beginning last summer, UNITA was finding it harder to locate suppliers who would risk exposure, and more expensive to deal with those who were willing to assume such risks. They were equally clear, however, about the fact that Savimbi believes that he can still buy the products and the people he needs — that, in other words, it remains only a matter of money. Many witnesses stressed that continued vigilance would be required to ensure that the world's attention remained focused on the matter of the effective application of sanctions; for, if we revert to past practice, Mr. Savimbi will soon find willing, cut-rate suppliers who will re-emerge from under the rocks once the spotlight has shifted elsewhere.

There are welcome developments across the spectrum of the sanctions regime. I might cite, in this regard, very recent information from Brussels regarding measures undertaken by the Belgian Government designed to respond to many of the concerns reflected in this report. These steps are, I believe, consistent with what the Panel is calling for and include initiating research on techniques to identify the origin of rough diamonds and engaging the Government of Angola in improving the reconciliation of information contained in improved certificates of origin — which can still be improved.

Additional information from a variety of sources will, we think and hope, continue to become available. I would note, in this regard, that the Government of Belarus has now provided the substantive reply to the Panel's questions to which the report refers. In addition, several Governments are investigating suspected sanctions busters with the objective of criminal prosecution. I know the Committee looks forward to learning of the results of these investigations. In referring to information available to the Panel, I should also note the steadfast support and encouragement that the Angola sanctions Committee and the Panel have received from United Kingdom Minister of State, Peter Hain, and I am delighted that he could be with us today.

The release of this report clearly does not suggest that our collective efforts to deny UNITA the wherewithal to make war are at an end. The fundamental lesson the Panel has drawn is that continued vigilance is required if UNITA is to be deprived of its military capability. This will remain true until peace is at last firmly and irretrievably anchored within Angola. More than once, we have seen how Mr. Savimbi's UNITA used every second of what we took to be peace to prepare for the next phase of the war, to which he would return as soon as he had been able to reconstitute his forces and restore his military supplies.

In my discussions with the diplomatic community in Luanda a couple of months ago, I was struck by the utter absence of any enthusiasm for further periods of phony peace or for yet another round of sham negotiations. Instead, there seemed to be a widespread belief that, until UNITA was denied the ability to pursue its objectives through military means, the people of Angola would never know peace. This, of course, is the mission assigned to me as Chairman of the Committee and the one the Council assigned to the Expert Panel: show us how we can deny UNITA the military option. The Panel has admirably acquitted this task. Its report has provided us with comprehensive and far-reaching recommendations detailing how this mission might be accomplished more effectively. Now it is up to us, as members of the Security Council, to implement it.

The Panel was, of course, not able to bring all investigative leads to a conclusion within its six-month mandate. Members of the Panel rightly look to the Sanctions Committee and to this Council to follow through. Specifically, the Panel recommends in its final recommendation — recommendation 39 — that, as Chairman of the Sanctions Committee, I be required to report to the Council on actions taken to follow up on the conclusions and recommendations contained in this report. It further recommends that the Council ensure that it is able to monitor closely the further implementation of sanctions as well as follow up on information collected by the Panel where the Panel itself was unable to complete its investigations — possibly, by establishing a monitoring mechanism in addition to the Sanctions Committee. In other words, now that the sanctions are beginning to have real impact, we must not make the mistake of letting up the pressure on UNITA.

Allow me to reiterate my thanks to Panel members for acquitting their task with such commendable professionalism and skill and for producing so lucid and

compelling a report. Allow me also to thank colleagues in the Secretariat and in the field who made it possible to overcome the administrative difficulties associated with launching a demanding initiative unprecedented in its design and objectives.

The Member States that contributed to the Trust Fund established in association with the Panel also deserve particular recognition. They are Brazil, Canada, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Other Governments, including that of Switzerland, also provided support.

I am speaking here today as the Chairman of a subsidiary body of the Council. To underscore this point, our President and the members of the Council have permitted some innovative seating arrangements this morning which allow me to honour the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur of the Panel, who have joined us here today.

It would, however, be remiss of me if I did not acknowledge the support that my own Government has provided. The time and attention I have been allowed to accord to my chairmanship of the Sanctions Committee and the cost and extent of the travels that I and my colleagues in the Canadian mission have undertaken are reflections of the real and deep commitment that the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, accords to addressing persistent threats to human security — threats which, tragically, are as acute in Angola as anywhere else in the world. I should note, however, that Mr. Axworthy and the Government of Canada have been scrupulous in respecting the independent nature of the initiative of the Expert Panel and have neither sought nor were offered an opportunity to influence the content of the Panel's report.

Mr. Axworthy has, however, on numerous occasions urged me to make these sanctions work better — that is, to do our bit to restore the Council's credibility in the matter of the effective application of appropriate sanctions, a theme to which he intends to return next month during Canada's presidency. With the consent of the members of the Council, he hopes to convene a meeting of the Council in mid-April to allow member States to address the broader issue of making sanctions more generally effective and to act decisively on the recommendations contained in the report before us.

Finally — and this time Dick Holbrooke is really going to score some points on my attempt at Oscar presentations — I must personally thank David Angell,

who, appropriately, sits today in the Canadian seat. Without David's remarkable diplomatic skills, none of us would have achieved nearly as much.

Many members of the Council will be aware that I had intended this morning to screen some further videotaped testimony from UNITA defectors. I have chosen not to do that, at least at this time, for two reasons. First, given the not always accurate press stories at the end of last week and the earlier than foreseen distribution of the Panel's report, Members of the Organization have less of a need to be assisted in a quick appreciation of the import and value of this report. Secondly, and more importantly, I do not want to divert attention from the report itself or to distract in any way from its main messages. The video was intended to support and buttress some of the findings of the Panel, which, as the report indicates, drew on the interviews I conducted in Luanda a couple of months ago as well as on many other sources of information. This excellent report needs no embellishment to assist in driving home its conclusions and recommendations. They speak forcefully and effectively for themselves and I heartily commend them to you, Sir.

Mr. Hain (United Kingdom): I thank you, Sir, for your kind welcome and congratulate you on bringing us together in open meeting on this vital subject. I am also extremely grateful to Ambassador Fowler for his updating briefing.

For far too long, Angola has been ravaged by conflict, used as a proxy by the super-Powers during the cold war and largely ignored when their priorities shifted. The Angolan people continue to suffer enormously. Their suffering is only briefly punctuated by false dawns of hope provided by ultimately unsuccessful peace accords.

Angola is the worst place in the world to be a child. Life expectancy is 42 years. There are over 3 million internally displaced people. Millions of landmines are laid by both sides, killing and maiming every day. The humanitarian situation is dire. It is a country so devastated it makes you want to cry and yet a country so rich in resources that, with peace and good governance, it could feed the whole of southern Africa and be a Power for prosperity and success in a continent blighted by poverty and failure.

We cannot allow the misery to continue. The time has come for the international community to face up to its obligations. It is no good putting our hands up in the

United Nations for sanctions against UNITA and then taking no action while citizens in our countries make money out of misery. That is simply hypocrisy. We must all rigorously implement and enforce sanctions. The time has come to stamp on the sanctions busters. That is why the report of the Expert Panel is so vital.

We have worked very closely with Ambassador Fowler and have fully supported his work, both financially and operationally. I would like to congratulate him on the drive and commitment he has brought to the Angola sanctions Committee and to thank his country, Canada, for the support that it has given him. His determination and the work of his expert panels have highlighted the porous and haphazard nature of the enforcement of sanctions against UNITA.

The report is very important for the United Nations. It exposes the hypocrisy of those countries — and, sometimes, leaders — that condemn UNITA while some of their citizens and companies supply Jonas Savimbi with the arms, munitions, fuel and assistance without which 25 years of murderous activities would have ended long ago.

The report names and shames some of those illegally supplying UNITA: some African Government Ministers and public officials, who should be ashamed of the way they are inflicting catastrophe on their fellow Africans; many arms dealers from Eastern Europe; and air companies and fuel suppliers that make money out of a war that has been privatized and is therefore less amenable to diplomatic pressure of a conventional kind. All of these are merchants of death. It is time for all the Governments of the world to act against them. The United Nations must provide a lead.

The full force of law must be brought to bear on those responsible. Britain has frozen several of Savimbi's bank accounts. I have named a number of alleged sanctions busters. I have passed their names to the United Nations Angola sanctions Committee. I will continue to pass on all such information. If we discover that any British citizens or British-based companies are implicated, we will act against them. We have to cut off Savimbi's means to wage war.

The private sector has a major role to play, too. Private companies should take a lead. De Beers has done so. I congratulate it on its initiative to stop trading in blood diamonds from Angola. Other diamond traders should back De Beers's commitment to a written guarantee on all invoices that its diamonds are not fuelling wars.

The Belgian Government and industry are now coming up with proposals on conflict diamonds — and not before time. I hope other trading centres will follow suit. I am sure the Israeli Government will want to do the same about Tel Aviv. It is encouraging that Southern African diamond-producing nations, the International Diamond Manufacturers Association and the Diamond High Council in Antwerp are looking at the problem of conflict diamonds. I urge others to do so as well.

The expert panels have shone their torch into some dark corners. We now need to turn on the light and expose the full extent of the vile trade in UNITA diamonds, arms, fuel and other supplies. And we must remember that these same forces are driving equally devastating conflicts elsewhere in Africa: in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Sierra Leone.

Let us not forget why we are doing this. The Angolan Government has had significant successes against Savimbi's war machine. That is welcome. But military action alone will not end the conflict. The Government cannot destroy UNITA's military capability, just as UNITA has no possibility of winning the war. Only a political solution can bring lasting peace. There will have to be a negotiated peace settlement. But Savimbi's word cannot be trusted. He has always reneged on the peace agreements he has signed. Without him, the war would end soon and UNITA supporters could express their aspirations through legitimate political channels.

UNITA represents an important constituency in Angola. I again urge UNITA to replace Savimbi as leader. With him out of the way, and a different leadership, UNITA can be as much a part of the solution as it has, so sadly, been part of the problem.

The whole of Angola has been corrupted by the war. Once-noble objectives held by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola for decent public services, a drive against poverty and equality of opportunity were first diverted because of the necessity to fight UNITA. Then they were forgotten, as rich elites lined their own pockets at the expense of their long-suffering people. Angola desperately needs to use its wealth to spend more on building up its skills base, social projects, public services and infrastructure. I have had excellent meetings to discuss this with the President of Angola and, today, with the Foreign Minister, who is here with us. I am very grateful for their warm invitation to visit Angola. I intend to do so soon.

To win full backing from the international community, the Angolan Government needs to ensure full transparency and accountability, particularly in the oil account. This is essential if Angola's immense economic potential is to be realized. It needs also to ensure that respect for human rights and freedom of speech flourishes. It needs to involve all sections of civil society in that task.

The military defeats suffered by Savimbi, coupled with renewed interest in and attention to sanctions busters, led by this report, provides an opportunity, unprecedented in 25 years, to end this war. We have an absolute duty to grasp it. We have it in our power to do so by making sanctions bite. All that has been lacking so far is the political will.

Savimbi's supplies are ferried in by air, or sometimes by road. They reach him only because they are permitted to do so. It would not be difficult to stop this. The intelligence capacity is there. Sanctions-busting planes and lorries are easy to detect. Their points of origin can be identified. Let every country cooperate to do this.

We need to ensure that the purveyors of misery are detected by enforcing sanctions. I thank Ambassador Fowler for enhancing our capacity to do so. We welcome the Expert Panel's exposure of UNITA's secretive and illegal network of middlemen and Government sponsors. But we need to do more than naming and shaming to break UNITA's ability to rearm. As the report makes clear, public censure must now be followed by decisive action in the sanctions Committee, in the Security Council, in the States concerned and by their neighbours.

Britain looks forward to a series of mandatory United Nations resolutions to implement the report's key recommendations. The Security Council, meeting next month, must take decisive action. There must be no delay and no equivocation. The credibility of the Security Council is at stake. The Security Council commissioned this report; we have a duty to act upon it and to support it.

Tough decisions will be needed. Governments in some of the countries named, including Belgium and South Africa, have started to take action against their nationals who are breaching sanctions. I welcome this. Unfortunately, others are already excusing themselves or denying their complicity. But now there is nowhere to hide. It is up to all of us — every one of us here today — to follow through. The Panel's report highlights the plight of the Angolan people. We must not let them down.

The President: I thank the Minister of State of the United Kingdom for his encouragement to the Council to act on this report.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): First of all, allow me, on behalf of the delegation of Ukraine, to welcome the Minister for External Relations of Angola, Mr. João Bernardo de Miranda, and the British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr. Peter Hain.

I would like to start my comments on the outstanding presentation by Ambassador Fowler with one recollection, which, in my view, will be very relevant in the context of today's meeting. Approximately a year ago, the Security Council received a report from the Secretary-General, on the basis of which it decided to terminate the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola. Undoubtedly, the resumption of war in Angola and the United Nations retreat from that country was an outright failure — one of the biggest failures of this world body in recent years.

Today the Security Council has received another report, which provides undeniable evidence that the United Nations is coming back to Angola willing to make a tangible contribution towards restoring peace and security in that part of the world. Ukraine is strongly convinced that decreasing UNITA's ability to wage war by strengthening the effectiveness of the measures imposed by the Security Council against it is a fundamental prerequisite to achieving the ultimate goal of putting a stop to the long-lasting suffering of the Angolan people.

I would like to express my delegation's appreciation to all of the members of the Panel of Experts, whose studious efforts have resulted in the very important document just presented to the Council. The leadership of Ambassador Fowler in that endeavour has been of particular significance and should receive the Council's distinct acknowledgement.

As to our reaction to the substance of the report's findings and recommendations, for understandable reasons my delegation's comments today will be only initial and certainly not comprehensive.

First of all, I would like to focus special attention on one particular point, which bears direct relation to my country. It is known that during the last twelve months, Ukraine has been the object of unsubstantiated allegations in some media implicating her in the violation of

sanctions imposed by the Security Council against UNITA. Very unfortunately, some of our friends, primarily in Africa but also in some European countries, were about to believe the truthfulness of those reports without their credible corroboration.

As a staunch and proven supporter of the Charter of the United Nations and decisions of the Security Council, Ukraine was seriously concerned by the emergence of such erroneous presumptions. My Government has not only denied these allegations as absolutely groundless but has also provided reliable evidence that Ukraine was fully in compliance with international law and norms relating to the enforcement of sanctions against UNITA.

Today these assurances of the Government of Ukraine are impressively confirmed by the relevant findings of the Panel of Experts. With your permission, Mr. President, I would like to quote the most important pertinent conclusions from the report:

"The Panel's investigation turned up no evidence that the Government of Ukraine sold arms or otherwise provided military assistance directly or indirectly to UNITA." (para. 40)

Furthermore, as it is stated in another conclusion of the report:

"The Panel found no evidence to suggest that Ukraine was directly or indirectly involved in the training of UNITA personnel." (para. 45)

It has always been inconceivable that Ukraine could ever be involved in direct or indirect support of antigovernmental forces or in violation of Security Council's sanctions regimes. The Government of Ukraine is very grateful to the Panel of Experts for dispelling any doubt in that respect.

Ukraine will take active participation in further consideration by the Council of the report's recommendations. I would limit my present comments to only one of them, recommendation 6, found in paragraph 57, which is based on the earlier proposal by Ukraine to convene an international experts' meeting of major arms-producing countries with a view to elaborating effective measures to prevent the reselling of arms from the end users to third parties.

We understand the reasons why the report advances the idea of bringing together Eastern European arms

suppliers. However, we strongly believe that the task of stemming the illicit flow of arms into Angola has to be addressed by all major arms producers and suppliers rather than be tackled only by a group of Eastern European countries. Ukraine will strongly advocate expeditious, but also well-considered, further action by the Security Council in response to the recommendations of the report. Unquestionably, these recommendations have to be studied thoroughly. At the same time, we believe it is important to start the relevant work without delay, and we are looking forward to Canada's leadership in that endeavour.

We also feel that it is absolutely important to hear the views on the report of the wider membership of the United Nations and to take them duly into account before initiating the Council's drafting work on its further decision. This is why, Mr. President, we would encourage you to resume this discussion as soon as you deem practicable in order to allow those not members of the Council to air their opinions on the matter.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like to welcome here the Minister for External Relations of Angola, Mr. De Miranda, and Minister Peter Hain of the United Kingdom. We are also pleased to see some members of the Panel here, particularly the Chairman, Ambassador Möllander.

Thank you, Mr. President, for putting the situation in Angola on the Council's agenda today. The people of Angola have been suffering for too long from really devastating humanitarian consequences of a conflict which has gone on for far too long.

Today, for the first time we are considering the report submitted by the Panel of Experts just introduced by Ambassador Fowler. I have three comments I wish to make on the report introduced by the Ambassador of Canada.

My first comment is that the report highlights a wide variety of kinds of actors who are involved in varying degrees in relations with UNITA. The experts mention Governments, but also companies, individuals, various traffickers, arms suppliers, airlines, mercenary groups and diamond firms. The information also concerns very different regions: Africa, Europe and North America. The first impression one gets from the Panel report is that there is a great variety of actors and situations, and we should bear in mind this variety. The

report cannot be reduced to three or four names, but rather describes a complex reality.

My second comment is that the report stresses the consequences of sanctions busting, namely continued fighting in Angola, for which UNITA is primarily responsible. So the consequences are really disastrous for the people of Angola as a whole. The report also describes how UNITA continues military activities outside of Angola. This is particularly the case with information about UNITA's military support for rebels and for some belligerent States in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The report indicates that in exchange for that support, those belligerent States and rebel groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have helped UNITA get fuel or trade diamonds. Thus, the report rightly shows that there is a serious effect of contagion of fighting and an increase in regional instability, which is particularly disturbing, as Ambassador Fowler has just told us in his introductory comments.

My third comment is that the report describes how sanctions busting has evolved over time. Some information is more historical, for example, ties between UNITA and Zaire before 1997, with Congo-Brazzaville before 1998, or some facts that go back to 1993 or 1995. Other information is more recent and deserves very close scrutiny. In several cases, the report shows that the sanctions regime has become more effective. Much of this is because of the development of the military situation in Angola and efforts made by the Government of Angola. But also, gradually, measures have been taken by the countries and in the professions concerned. For example, there were decisions by the diamond industry last October, six months after the Panel of Experts was established to implement resolution 1173 (1998) of June 1998. Establishing the Panel of Experts has obviously had some impact in encouraging people to do something, but we have to analyze the actual steps taken, especially by the De Beers company. In any case, such decisions, such an evolution, should be encouraged.

It is now for the Security Council to look closely at the information provided and the recommendations made by the Experts. As I have just said, the experts' report describes a complex reality. That information deserves detailed scrutiny by the members of the Council. I should like to ask some questions in this regard.

With regard to the question of dates, in some cases the experts were rather imprecise about the dates of alleged incidents. For example, it is often not indicated exactly

when some incidents took place. Sometimes the year is given but the day or month is not indicated; sometimes there is no exactitude at all. It would therefore be desirable to have more precise information on the dates so that we can better determine — particularly with regard to the economic sanctions imposed in 1998, concerning diamonds in particular — whether the events described by the experts occurred before or after the imposition of those sanctions.

There is also the question of the sources of information. Quite often those are not spelled out, thereby raising questions. Sometimes the experts indicate that they have obtained information from "a source close to Savimbi". It is true that one cannot include all the names in a public report. But some of these matters can be detailed later.

There are also questions as to UNITA's representation abroad. The report mentions that persons regarded as being linked to UNITA have been present in or have visited certain countries. But the experts do not say whether those persons are or are not on the list drawn up by the sanctions Committee. One could therefore ask whether it is really a case of violations of sanctions when the persons mentioned are not on that list. In this connection, we should also make the proper distinctions in order to better understand what steps need to be taken — particularly with regard to those proposed by the Panel — to update the sanctions Committee list.

We also have some questions about the scope of the violations that have taken place. We regret that the report still does not give an overall estimate of UNITA's revenue — what it has raised from diamond trafficking or the total amounts spent on arms and fuel purchases. I know it is not always easy to get reliable estimates, but we believe that even a rough estimate would help us estimate the relative importance of the various supply networks being used by UNITA, for example, for arms and fuel. If one could compare the orders of magnitude in figures, then we would better be able to assess the facts cited by the experts. That would help us determine what steps need to be taken to ensure better respect for sanctions.

For example, more precise information is needed about the network for the sale of rough diamonds. The report mentions the measures announced by the main companies in the diamond market, particularly those by the De Beers company in October 1999. But the report does not indicate whether measures were taken before

then to implement the sanctions enacted by the Security Council in 1998. The report gives us quite a lot of information about diamonds, but only as to certain European markets, particularly the Antwerp market, but very little, and in some cases none, about other diamond markets in Europe or elsewhere. Without question, more detail would also be useful in this connection.

On all of these points it will be necessary to get explanations from the countries mentioned in the experts' report. States cited by the experts, either because of deeds committed by the Governments themselves or because of deeds committed by their nationals or from their territories, should be permitted to make their views known. Ambassador Fowler's report directly accuses certain Governments. Those are serious accusations. They were published just yesterday without the States concerned being able to make their views known simultaneously. In fact, we do not even know whether those States had an opportunity to respond to the experts during the time the report was being prepared or whether they were specifically informed about the accusations against them before the issuance of the report.

It is for these reasons that my delegation would like members of the Council to consider thoroughly the information in the report and the explanations that will be provided by the countries concerned. One way to do this could be to turn this task over to the competent sanctions Committee, under the direction of its Chairman, Ambassador Fowler. The Committee could question the Chairman of the Panel, Mr. Möllander, in greater detail. It could also receive communications from States cited in the report that wish to make their views known. The Committee could then transmit its own conclusions to the Security Council. It will ultimately be up to the Council to consider, on the basis of the sanctions Committee's conclusions, what follow-up action to take on the recommendations of the experts.

I would note that some of those recommendations are general in nature — for example, those on arms production registers — and should be dealt with in the competent forum. Other recommendations, particularly those dealing with the imposition of new sanctions on third States, could result in problems regarding the effectiveness of that kind of step and the multiplication of sanctions regimes. These questions go beyond the framework of sanctions against UNITA and will require some thought at the appropriate time by the entire Council on sanctions in general.

The Panel of Experts, under the leadership of the Ambassador of Canada, has gathered a lot of information. It has made a major effort that France has supported. My country was one of the first to make a voluntary contribution to the Panel. It is now up to the Security Council to consider closely the information and recommendations of the experts and draw its own conclusions. Efforts to implement sanctions should be pursued in order to make UNITA respect its obligations.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): I would like to thank the President for convening this open meeting of the Council to enable Ambassador Fowler, Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993), to present the report of the Panel of Experts on violations of Security Council sanctions against UNITA.

I acknowledge the presence of the two Ministers at this important meeting.

I wish to express my delegation's appreciation for Ambassador Fowler's forceful presentation of the report. Chairman Fowler and the entire team of the Panel of Experts deserve our commendation for their outstanding work in trying to give meaning to the efforts of the Council for a more effective implementation of the sanctions regime. We are profoundly grateful to Ambassador Fowler and commend him for the seriousness, energy and resources he has brought to bear on the work of the Committee. The result is an active and robust Committee which is at the forefront of the international campaign to cripple the war-making capability of UNITA. The success of those efforts is evidenced by the current military situation on the ground in Angola — in which UNITA has suffered serious setbacks, thus decisively turning the tide of this long, debilitating war.

The report before the Council is as in-depth and comprehensive as it is bold and candid. It has the courage to name people, commercial companies and Governments on the basis of investigations carried out by the Panel of Experts. Naturally, all those named should have the right to respond to the allegations and to clarify their own roles in the alleged sanctions-busting activities. If those clarifications are not plausible and cannot be borne out by facts, the international community and the Council will doubtless draw their own conclusions and take appropriate actions.

We note that the Panel of Experts has investigated UNITA's supply routes, which must now be effectively

blocked if we are serious in our objective to frustrate UNITA's war efforts. UNITA spends hundreds of millions of dollars for its fuel, munitions and weapons supplies, which come in through various means — often on transport planes with international and regional connections and sometimes with pilots well known to agencies monitoring African conflicts. They invariably go through neighbouring African countries, frequently with the assistance of corrupt officials who take their cut but whose Governments claim ignorance of these illegal activities. Clearly, what is needed is a new will and determination on the part of the international community and this Council to enforce more vigorously the sanctions regime, and the full and more effective cooperation of the countries and the companies concerned in stopping breaches of the sanctions. This would include making those responsible accountable for their transgressions under international law.

On the diamond industry front, we welcome the decision of the Government of Angola to embark upon a wholesale effort to revamp and restructure virtually all aspects of the diamond- mining and diamond-trading industry of the country. We also recognize the steps being taken by Luanda to enhance enforcement of the sanctions, including the introduction of new, standardized certificates of origin which will be harder to forge and make it easier to verify and keep track of diamonds. In these efforts, we believe that the responsible Governments and industry authorities should be invited to work with the sanctions Committee to devise practical measures to limit and ultimately halt UNITA's access to legitimate diamond markets. Major diamond-trading centres named in the report need to be consulted and fully engaged. At the same time, we are also mindful of the concerns that international solutions to the Angolan problem must not be allowed to adversely affect the entire global diamond industry. We must do nothing to harm the legitimate diamond industry. Its cooperation is vital in finding ways to help us regulate the trade so that it does maximum good and minimum harm.

Although it is possible that UNITA has enough wealth and resources to keep going for years, we are convinced that the options for action contained in the report with respect to this aspect of the sanctions regime are implementable. Diamonds are UNITA's lifeline, which must now be cut in order to dry up its main source of income for waging the war. UNITA's assets must be tracked down and confiscated and its bank accounts frozen. The international banking community must fully cooperate with the Council in this regard. Appropriate Council action should be taken in respect of those individuals, companies

and Governments that have been named in the report and cannot plausibly or convincingly explain their alleged roles.

The report also makes clear that the weapons made available to UNITA were of foreign origin. The illegal supply of weapons to Angola and other parts of Africa is simply too numerous to ignore. The idea of bringing together these foreign suppliers of arms with a view to formulating concrete proposals on how best to stem the illicit flow of arms would be a constructive and, hopefully, an effective process in addressing this aspect of the problem.

On another aspect of the report, we share its assertion that there is a clear link between all crises in Africa. Angola was led to intervene in the Democratic Republic of the Congo because UNITA sought to operate from that country. Paragraph 50 of the report indicates the substantial presence of UNITA troops and advisers fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including the deployment of UNITA troops in the north-eastern sector of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These undeniable linkages clearly underline the need for the Council to deal with all the crises in the region in a comprehensive manner.

We must now put to good use the vital store of information in our possession pertaining to the breaches of sanctions against UNITA. The Council should now look carefully at how it can target individuals who profit in the prolongation of the war. We should also examine closely the legal options open to us. All of this would require the continuing strong support and cooperation of Governments both within and outside the region. The Council obviously cannot act alone, even with such an effective and indefatigable Chairman of the sanctions Committee as Ambassador Fowler. Member States and international agencies must collaborate effectively with the Council to achieve this.

All who yearn for peace in Africa must work together to usher in this peace. The report calls for countries of the Southern African Development Community to play a major role to enforce sanctions against UNITA. This is their major contribution to help find an African solution to this African problem. With UNITA weakened by the Angolan Armed Forces military successes and increasing surveillance of its supply channels, we should not miss this opportunity to act decisively now, lest we be accused of timidity and lack of resolve, or worse still, hypocrisy. Let us work

together to end the plague of destruction, pain and death forced on Angola and its long-suffering people.

My delegation is naturally concerned at the continuing acts of sanctions breaking vis-à-vis UNITA, which constitute a very serious challenge to the Council's collective authority. My delegation therefore urges Member States to respect fully the existing Council resolutions on sanctions against UNITA. The report has put forward a set of 39 bold and far-reaching recommendations for the consideration of the Council. We believe many of these proposals are concrete measures which should be seriously considered in order to ensure that the sanctions regime will be more effectively observed. We agree with Chairman Fowler that the Council should be more actively engaged in the effort to improve the implementation and enforcement of the sanctions against UNITA and to curb existing violations. My delegation is aware that there is a very real risk that when the spotlight is turned off, UNITA and its partners will go back to doing business as usual. This should not be allowed to happen. The Council should vigorously work to put more teeth in the implementation of the sanctions regime, for with UNITA there can be no business as usual. My delegation looks forward to participating actively and constructively in a further, in-depth consideration of the report by the Council.

Finally, my delegation once again condemns most strongly the downing of the two United Nations aircraft in UNITA-held territory in Huambo in December 1998 and January 1999. The involvement of UNITA in the shooting down of the two aircraft and the "specific orders" given to UNITA soldiers by Savimbi to shoot down any and all United Nations aircraft reflect the criminal character of this rebel group and its rogue leader. Such actions cannot be tolerated or the perpetrators allowed to go with impunity.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): Today I am speaking as coordinator of the troika of observer States to the Lusaka Protocol: the United States, Portugal and the Russian Federation. We are grateful to Minister for External Relations Miranda for attending this meeting and look forward to his contributions to this discussion. We also welcome the arrival of Ambassador José Patricio, who will soon present his credentials to the Secretary-General.

We welcome the report of the Expert Panel and commend Chairman Möllander and his Panel members for their sustained efforts. The work of the Panel has enhanced the role of the international community in the search for lasting peace in Angola, and it has also focused new attention on the link between the illegal exploitation of

Angola's natural resources and the continuation of the conflict. We recognize the creative and energetic work of Ambassador Fowler as Chairman of the sanctions Committee, believing that his commitment to the implementation of sanctions served as an important catalyst for this report.

Sanctions remain a key tool in the international community's efforts on behalf of peace in Angola. The report of the Expert Panel has highlighted in stark and dramatic fashion a systematic pattern of violations by the UNITA leadership and with the collusion of foreign actors. Whether the foreign actors are motivated by greed or by political conviction, their support for UNITA's military machine has prolonged the suffering of the Angolan people. While we believe that the overall impact of sanctions has been beneficial to the search for peace, this report clearly demonstrates a need for continued strengthening of such measures, particularly in the areas of diamond sales, arms purchases and foreign travel. We note that the cumulative impact of the three sets of United Nations sanctions has been to gradually erode UNITA's ability to resupply its forces and to capitalize on its external links. However, the key elements of the report are its recommendations for future action. We look forward to working with the Council and others to turn this highly informative document into a reinvigorated plan of action.

The Expert Panel and the Committee have, in our assessment, increased the cost and difficulty of UNITA's continued military campaign. It is very difficult to speculate on UNITA's present military capacity. However, the information available to us indicates that the renewed vigour that Ambassador Fowler and the Expert Panel brought to the implementation of Security Council resolutions 864 (1993), 1127 (1997) and 1173 (1998) has had a positive impact.

In addition to making a contribution to the search for peace in Angola, the sanctions Committee and Expert Panel have also done pioneering work, under challenging circumstances, on the difficult question of applying sanctions regimes to non-State actors.

The Security Council has long maintained the position that the primary cause of the continued conflict in Angola is the failure of UNITA to abide by its commitments under the Lusaka Protocol. Sanctions remain a tool to be used in pursuit of the goals of the Lusaka Protocol, still the most viable blueprint for peace, continued democratization and national reconciliation.

The international community's expectation of UNITA is its full demilitarization, the full extension of State administration and its full participation in the democratic political life of the country. The Security Council's sanctions must remain in effect until all elements of UNITA have taken full, irreversible and verifiable steps to completely implement the Lusaka Protocol.

UNITA sanctions have always been targeted at the leaders of the organization who have remained outside the Lusaka process and at its military capacity, not at those leaders who have participated in the institutions established by the Lusaka Protocol, and not at the overwhelming majority of UNITA's supporters, whom we believe to be in favour of peace.

The revelations and recommendations of the Expert Panel require careful consideration, and we look forward to a discussion in the Council on next steps. For now, however, the report paints a picture — one which is largely corroborated by our own information — of continued international support for UNITA's military leadership. At this point, we strongly urge the leaderships of those parties cited in the report to re-examine their policies vis-à-vis UNITA and to commit themselves to comply fully with all Council measures in effect.

Mr. Mársico (Argentina) (spoke in Spanish): I should like at the outset, Mr. President, to thank you for convening this open briefing. You are well aware of the importance that we attach to this kind of meeting. I wish also especially to thank Ambassador Robert Fowler, the Chairman of the sanctions Committee on Angola, for his introduction to the report of the Panel of Experts, contained in document S/2000/203, and, through him, all of the members of the Panel.

Furthermore, I wish to welcome the presence at this meeting of the Minister of External Relations of Angola, which I deem of the greatest importance, and of Minister Peter Hain of the United Kingdom, who has honoured us once again with his presence, sharing with us his tremendous and broad-ranging personal and professional experience in matters relating to Africa.

For more than 20 years, the international community has been striving to secure a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Angola. My country can identify itself with these efforts; indeed, from 1989 onwards it has deployed personnel there, since the operations of the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola began.

Despite that presence and the successive efforts of the international community, the results have not been not sufficient to bring the conflict to an end or to promote compliance with the 1991 Peace Accord or the 1994 Lusaka Protocol.

In this conflict, the existence and abundance of natural resources, and of diamonds in particular, have played a significant role in perpetuating the conflict by fostering war, facilitating the purchase of weapons, fuels and even of political support. The strategic value of diamonds was recognized by the Security Council when in 1998 it incorporated into the sanctions regime a ban on the sale of diamonds from UNITA sources.

The continued conflict in Angola has no single origin. However, the presentation of this report, the attention that it has attracted and the fact that we all have come to meet here today should be used not only to promote enhanced implementation of the sanctions but also to step up political efforts to put an end to the conflict in Angola.

The report, as we read it, raises many issues that go beyond identifying violations or attributing blame. I believe that we need to ask ourselves what we need to do to ensure that this kind of situation does not recur. In the area of peacekeeping operations, the concept of "lessons learned" is a meaningful one. It should be significant also in the context of sanctions.

This comment serves also to remind us once again of the need to consider seriously the desirability of establishing more effective monitoring mechanisms for sanctions regimes. We wonder what message is sent by a sanctions regime without effective controls.

Over the last 20 years the international community has invested considerable sums in the peace process in Angola. How much in the way of resources, however, has been allocated to the effective monitoring of these sanctions? What consequences might there have been for the Angolan peace process if there had been more effective monitoring of the sanctions regime?

The Panel's report is a genuine effort to clarify fully certain relevant issues, such as how the sanctions are being violated, who is violating them and what measures can be taken to make sanctions a more effective instrument in the Angolan peace process. To this end, the Panel is presenting the Security Council with 39 recommendations and a set of conclusions. In the coming

weeks we shall have to study them carefully and act accordingly.

However, it is noteworthy that in recent days the information contained in the report has already produced significant repercussions: many Governments and forums have started a number of investigations. We encourage these endeavours and trust that the appropriate corrective measures will be taken with equal determination.

This report is useful not only for Angola. It should serve to remind us of all that remains to be done with respect to other sanctions Committees. In this regard, it contains a number of elements that we feel might be of use to the panel of experts on sanctions recently set up by the Security Council under the leadership of Ambassador Fowler, and which will be reporting to the Council in a month's time.

In conclusion, I would like to recall that in 1994 the non-governmental organization Human Rights Watch published a lengthy report on the violations of the sanctions regime then in force in Angola. That report anticipated some of the conclusions of the current Panel. We hope that today the international community is better prepared to react to this kind of information and that we will be able to take good advantage of this new opportunity. The course of action we now take depends on each and every one of us. For our part we hope that a further report in four or five years time will not find us in the same situation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, like my colleagues I would like to say that I am pleased by the presence at today's meeting of the Minister for External Relations of Angola, His Excellency Mr. De Miranda. We also join in the thanks expressed here today to the Panel of Experts and its Chairman, Ambassador Möllander, for the work they have done. We are also grateful to the Chairman of the sanctions Committee, Ambassador Fowler, for his introduction of this report to the Security Council.

As can be seen from this preliminary discussion today, members of the Security Council are united in their assessment of the situation in Angola and also in their assessment of the role to be played by Council sanctions in settling the conflict. It is clear that enhancing the effectiveness of the sanctions regime offers great potential for stepping up pressure on the military and political leaders of UNITA, who are responsible for the breakdown of the Lusaka process.

There is a direct link between violations of the sanctions regime and the continuing threat the region poses to international peace and security. This is the standpoint from which we are looking at the report that has been submitted to the Security Council, which contains extensive factual information about sanctions violations and specific recommendations on how to step up monitoring of the implementation of the sanctions.

Like other delegations, we are very carefully analysing the information contained in the report, and we are also looking at how in practical terms the recommendations could be adopted. It is clear that substantive consideration of the report will take place once members of the Security Council have studied the document. It is also clear that the report has to be studied in the capitals, but even at this stage we can say that the information contained in the report does confirm the need for the Council's sanctions Committee to continue working vigorously, with a view to taking further steps so as to more successfully implement the relevant decisions of the Security Council.

We believe that the most serious attention should be given to the Panel's recommendations on stepping up the sanctions Committee's efforts, *inter alia*, in enhancing the effectiveness of the current sanctions regime as regards all the areas set forth in the Security Council resolutions. These areas include illegal supplies of arms, petroleum products, the export of diamonds, the handling of UNITA's assets and so forth. We are ready to work closely and actively on this issue with the Chairman of the sanctions Committee and all of our partners in the Security Council. We feel sure that we will all continue to make progress on this work and to conduct ourselves with the utmost seriousness.

Mr. Hamer (Netherlands): We are witnessing today quite an extraordinary event. An independent expert panel, established by this Council, has investigated the violations of sanctions against UNITA, lifting the edge of a veil that had for so long hung over the complex structures and networks that have allowed UNITA to maintain its stronghold over the years. This effort is without precedent, and it is an achievement in itself.

Like others, we commend the expert panel and the sanctions Committee, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Robert Fowler, for their work. Their report will send a strong signal that this Council is serious about the sanctions it imposes. We expect that the report's publication, in and of itself, will make a difference in

terms of the effectiveness of the United Nations sanctions against UNITA.

The report itself concludes that its effects can already be seen and that it has become harder for UNITA to sell diamonds and to buy weapons because of increased risks to those involved now that their shady dealings stand in the international limelight. The Expert Panel and the sanctions Committee Chairman are to be congratulated for this.

My delegation agrees that the effects of the report can be lasting only if there is a sustained follow-up. We have often spoken out in favour of the more effective monitoring of sanctions, and we have made some concrete proposals to that effect. The report's suggestion that the Panel should be succeeded by some monitoring mechanism, so as to avoid a return to business as usual, is important and deserves our full support.

The recommendations in the report deserve careful study by the Council. We will surely be revisiting the issue over the coming weeks and months, with more specific and detailed comments and suggestions. Allow me at this stage to limit myself to a few preliminary remarks on some elements of the report and its recommendations.

First, on diamonds: in a sense UNITA's access to mineral wealth constitutes the core of the problem. If UNITA were unable to pay for its military and diplomatic efforts, it would never be able to continue its senseless war. Therefore it is essential that we devise ways and means to establish the origin of rough diamonds. Without documented evidence as regards the origin, it is impossible to distinguish legal trade from illegal trade, and this is obviously in the interest also of bona fide exporting countries such as Namibia, Botswana and South Africa.

More generally, the Security Council needs to address in a systematic manner the problem of how conflicts are fuelled and prolonged by the access of the parties — legal or otherwise — to vast quantities of strategic resources. This issue goes beyond diamonds, and it goes beyond Angola. In fact, three of the bloodiest conflicts in Africa — in Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo — are fuelled by the illegal export of resources.

Secondly, on arms: the Netherlands welcomes the concrete and practical recommendations of the Panel in response to the violations of the arms embargo against UNITA. The Panel touches upon a number of very important issues that for very good reasons are high on the agenda of other forums as well. These issues include

brokerage, arms registers and end-user certificates. The Panel's conclusions and recommendations merit study and wide distribution, so as to feed the discussions in other relevant forums.

Exchange of information and transparency are key if we are going to be serious about combatting violations of sanctions. In this respect we should intensify our dialogue with exporters and potential exporters of arms and military equipment. More specifically, my delegation sees a role for regional organizations, such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in particular, but not exclusively, with regard to embargoes on arms and military equipment. Similarly, one could think of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), since some of its members are linked, in one way or another in this report, to illegal arms deliveries and ECOWAS, after all, has such a splendid record in dealing with issues like small arms at the regional level.

Finally, as I said earlier, the most important thing now is to see to it that the Panel exercise gets the best possible follow-up to avoid a return to business as usual and to the culture of impunity which has so far prevailed. We would like to be actively involved in any future efforts to develop the monitoring mechanism proposed in the report. It also seems to us that many of the proposals and recommendations in this report contain important lessons for the improved effectiveness of other sanctions regimes. This is an issue the Council should revert to with some urgency.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): My delegation joins previous speakers in thanking you, Sir, for convening this meeting. We also wish to welcome the Minister for External Relations of Angola and the Minister of State of the United Kingdom, who are with us today.

My delegation wishes to thank Ambassador Fowler for his clear and comprehensive presentation of the report of the Panel of Experts on violations of the Council's sanctions against Angola. We also wish to pay a tribute to him for his leadership of the Sanctions Committee, because it is largely thanks to his initiative, commitment and willingness to be innovative that the Expert Panel was established by the Council. We also wish to thank the members of the Council for the diligence, fearlessness and timeliness with which they have executed their mandate.

As the report reminds us, the purpose of the sanctions was not to punish UNITA, but to promote a peaceful settlement of the lengthy conflict in Angola by requiring UNITA to comply with obligations which it undertook in 1991 and 1994 and by limiting UNITA's ability to pursue its objectives by military means. It was for that reason that the sanctions were carefully targeted, relating to the supply of arms and fuel, UNITA's bank accounts, foreign travel of UNITA's officials and the operations of UNITA's offices abroad. All of these have been addressed by the Panel's investigations and recommendations on sanctions-busting.

We have noted from the report that the Panel's existence and presence have already had the important effect of stimulating Governments and others into focusing on what each of them can do to improve the implementation and enforcement of sanctions and to curtail existing violations. We therefore share the Panel's view that the Security Council and the international community must remain engaged in this effort. We must send a strong signal that breaches of the Council's sanctions regimes cannot be tolerated and that the activities of violators will not go unpunished.

My delegation recognizes that the report of the Expert Panel and its recommendations will require detailed study by the Sanctions Committee and by the Council itself. It is also important that those cited in the report cooperate with the Council by providing it with the necessary information. At this time, my delegation therefore wishes to offer a few preliminary comments, as this report has implications not only for Angola, but for the wider international community and for the sanctions regimes imposed by the Council.

First, the report leaves no doubt that there have been serious violations of the sanctions regimes by individuals, companies and government officials. Those who have violated the sanctions regime on Angola share in the responsibility for the human suffering resulting from the conflict and, with UNITA, are equally culpable in many of the tragic incidents, including the shooting-down of the United Nations aircraft.

Secondly, the Governments of the countries whose nationals are engaging in sanctions-busting have an obligation to investigate and to take appropriate action against those who are responsible. Such investigations and actions must be undertaken in a transparent and credible manner.

Thirdly, it is clear that UNITA abused the period following the signature of the Lusaka Protocol to accumulate arms and prepare itself for restarting the war. It is also clear that it was aided and abetted in this by a wide range of individuals in many countries.

Fourthly, the international community must bring to an end the flow of illegal arms to conflict situations. It must also better regulate the legal export of arms, particularly in regard to end-users.

Fifthly, the plundering of Africa's mineral resources to purchase arms to fuel these conflicts must be brought to a halt. In the case of Angola, without buyers for the diamonds, UNITA would not have been able to sell diamonds to finance its purchase of arms.

It is also clear that there has been a linkage established between the conflict in Angola and the conflicts in the Great Lakes region.

The perpetuation of the conflict in Angola continues to divert scarce resources, which should be used for the economic and social development of Angola. My delegation therefore calls on UNITA to spare the innocent people of Angola further hardship by ending the fighting and by complying with its obligations under the Lusaka Protocol. The war-weary people of Angola deserve to live without the violence and fear which have attended them over the past 25 years.

The report presented to the Council today represents a significant milestone. The action taken by the Council will present an opportunity for us to clearly demonstrate our determination to implement our decisions aimed at furthering international peace and security.

Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi (Namibia): Let me first take this opportunity to thank you, Sir, for convening this important open briefing to discuss the report of the Panel of Experts on violations of the Security Council sanctions against UNITA, an issue which is of critical importance to my country and to the entire region of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The presence here today of Mr. João Bernardo de Miranda, the Minister for External Relations of the Republic of Angola, is testimony to the importance Angola attaches — and rightly so — to this matter. We also commend Minister Hain's personal participation today and we highly appreciate his contribution.

Let me take this opportunity to highly commend Ambassador Fowler, the Chairman of the Sanctions Committee against UNITA, for his serious and tireless efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Security Council sanctions against UNITA and the obligations of member States to fully implement the Security Council resolutions against UNITA. Not only did Ambassador Fowler prove his leadership qualities and diplomatic skills, but, through his determination, he also sought to promote and restore the credibility of the Security Council in the preservation of human security and the peaceful resolution of that conflict. Indeed, my delegation notes with appreciation that there has been progress in the work of the Committee since Ambassador Fowler took over its chairmanship. My delegation pledges its fullest support for his tireless efforts to help bring peace to Angola.

We express strong support for the work undertaken by the Chairman of the Expert Panel, Ambassador Möllander, and his team, and thank them for producing this very informative report within the prescribed period.

Eight years ago — on 15 September 1993, to be precise — the Security Council adopted resolution 864 (1993), the first resolution imposing mandatory sanctions against UNITA in the area of arms and military equipment; thereafter, similar resolutions were adopted in the area of petroleum products, diamonds and finances. That decision by the Council was due to UNITA's intransigence and non-compliance. In its determination to resolve the conflict in Angola by compelling UNITA to comply with its resolutions, the Council reaffirmed on several occasions its readiness to review the measures and to consider the imposition of additional measures against UNITA.

Contrary to the expectations of the international community, with the assistance of some States, international organizations and individuals, UNITA became stronger day by day in its fight against the Government and the people of Angola.

I am trying to recapitulate this scenario so as to illustrate the various efforts which were employed by the Council in trying to resolve this conflict and, more importantly, so as to ensure that the Council will take seriously the report which has been presented by the Panel and the recommendations contained therein. If implemented, the recommendations can help bring lasting peace to Angola.

Resolution 1237 (1999), *inter alia*, established the panels to inform the Council on how the sanctions against

UNITA were being violated, who was violating them and what could be done to make the sanctions more effective. As the report clearly indicates, the objective of the Expert Panel was to promote a political settlement of the long conflict in Angola by requiring UNITA to comply with the obligations which it undertook when it signed the 1991 Bicesse Peace Accord and the 1994 Lusaka Protocol. Full implementation of resolution 1237 (1999) will do just that. It will deny UNITA the ability to keep peace and development hostage in Angola and, indeed, in southern Africa.

The situation in Angola continues to worsen. UNITA is continuing with its atrocities, indiscriminate killing of the innocent civilian population and the laying of landmines, and this report clearly indicates that the mandate of the Panel was to promote a political settlement to the never-ending conflict in Angola. UNITA must comply with the obligations it undertook when it signed the 1994 Lusaka Protocol. Let me take this opportunity to remind the Council that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) itself has adopted various resolutions on the situation in Angola, and those resolutions should be taken into account. Furthermore, the Southern African Development Community has declared Savimbi to be a war criminal, a decision that was, in turn, endorsed by the OAU.

We agree with the conclusions of the report that UNITA would not have continued with its political and military ambitions had it not been for the support of certain States and individuals that have provided the rebel movement with safe havens, facilitated sales and passage of weapons and assisted it with end-user certificates. It is also true that the willingness of some arms-supplying countries with little or no regard as to where those arms would finally end up contributed immensely to boosting the morale of rebels in Africa in fighting against legitimate Governments. Hence, peace in Angola lies in the hands of those individuals and Governments which are intentionally and knowingly assisting UNITA's war machinery.

We note the information presented in the report on the link between the war activities of UNITA in Angola and the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We concur with the evidentiary standard employed by the Panel. However, it is highly possible that important links might have been omitted. We are therefore strongly of the view that the ongoing

investigations of persons allegedly connected to UNITA will help during the monitoring process, which my delegation endorses and to which I shall revert later.

With regard to sanctions busting on arms and military equipment, the conflict in Angola has caused immense and unnecessary suffering to the people of Angola, resulting in the loss of millions of lives and the destruction of property. The United Nations continues to spend millions of dollars to help resolve the conflict in Angola. Sadly, millions of Angolans have known only war. This war could have been ended and taken off the Council's agenda had it not been for the support UNITA receives from within and outside Africa. It is therefore imperative that the Council apply sanctions to those leaders and Governments that have sustained UNITA's political and war machinery, in violation of Council resolutions. This bold and unprecedented action will enhance its authority and demonstrate its seriousness in the maintenance of international peace and security.

We appreciate the good work of the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) in uncovering UNITA's smuggling operations. Indeed, Namibia undertook investigations into the existence and activities of such operations, which have not been completed. The conclusions relating to arms and military equipment prove, among other things, that the capacity of UNITA to continue to pay for what it wants has kept the war in Angola going, thus maximizing the suffering and agony of the Angolan people and those of the entire region.

Paragraph 68 of the report refers to small-scale petroleum smuggling on the Namibia-Angola border. The Government of Namibia will certainly look into this matter, and we would appreciate assistance to curb those illegal dealings. We will continue to contribute to the Committee's work in this regard.

We commend the conclusions relating to petroleum and petroleum products. We would have thought that the conclusions would include all countries whose nationals are implicated in these activities according to the report.

We are greatly concerned at the extremely lax controls and regulations governing the world's rough diamond market. Illegal trading in diamonds is the main source of funding of rebel movements in Africa, particularly in Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We take serious note of paragraph 84 of the report, and we want underscore that Namibia has not been an official channel for the illegal diamond transactions of UNITA. We carried out investigations, going as far as the diamond markets in London, and it was discovered that those diamonds came from Namibian mines. We were able to do that because Namibian diamonds have special codes attached to them, thereby making it easy to control smuggling.

The private sector has an important role to play here. We welcome the measures taken by De Beers to cease buying any diamonds from UNITA. This has undoubtedly had an effect on UNITA's cash. We also highly commend the Angolan Government for the reform measures undertaken to restructure the mining and diamond industry. We support the Panel's 6 recommendations relating to diamonds.

With regard to UNITA's finances, it is important that countries where UNITA representatives control financial resources be identified. The panel should indeed provide the Committee with information on particulars of banks, bank accounts and credit cards used to facilitate UNITA's transactions. We agree with the recommendations relating to finances and assets. In our view, recommendation number 20 will serve as an incentive for disclosing finance busting.

It is our sincere hope that bank secrecy laws will be revised to enable States to uncover the amounts of illegal funds of the identified sanctions busters with a view to freezing them and finally releasing them to the authorities concerned, for the benefit of the people concerned, in this case the Angolan people.

With regard to UNITA's representation and travel abroad, the Government of Namibia has carried out investigations and discovered that none of the people whose names were provided by the Panel are residing in Namibia. We regret, however, our failure to communicate our findings to the Panel in time, as was indicated in the report. We continue with further investigations in this regard, and any information will be communicated to the Committee.

We support the recommendations relating to UNITA's representation and travel abroad. We have no doubt that Interpol, if requested, can indeed coordinate an international response to arrest warrants for these sanctions busters.

We note the information provided on the role of transport in sanctions busting and propose that those proposals be further examined by the Committee. We welcome the recommendations on related matters, especially those inviting the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to consider introducing the mobile radar system with the assistance of the international community.

On board the United Nations planes shot down in Angola were Namibian nationals. For the sake of all those who perished on the two planes and all other United Nations workers whose lives were taken by the enemies of peace, we support the relevant recommendation under this section.

With regard to recommendation 35, on considering the provision of medical supplies to UNITA, further thought should be given to this proposal so as not to create any loopholes for sanctions busting.

We also agree that a copy of the report should be submitted to the Organization of African Unity and SADC Secretaries-General. We are also in agreement that the monitoring mechanism should be established.

The Panel has given us its report. The Chairman of the Committee has introduced the report. Let us go to work on the recommendations contained therein. Namibia looks forward to the discussion of the draft resolution on these recommendations at the earliest possible time.

Finally, peace is cheaper than war. Let us help bring lasting peace to Angola.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation expresses its gratitude to Mr. De Miranda, Minister for External Relations of Angola, for attending this public debate. We also thank Ambassador Fowler for presenting to us, in his capacity of Chairman of the sanctions Committee on Angola, the report by the Panel of Experts.

We express our profound concern over the long-standing lack of progress in the peace process in Angola. UNITA and, in particular, Mr. Savimbi have refused to implement the commitments they undertook in the Lusaka Protocol, as well as the relevant resolutions adopted by the Security Council, and therefore should be considered the party that bears the main responsibility for the current situation in Angola. UNITA has constantly made provocations and attacked innocent civilians — even

attacking United Nations personnel and aircraft — and therefore deserves the condemnation and the sanctions of the international community.

The Chinese delegation appreciates the great efforts made by Ambassador Fowler as Chairman of the sanctions Committee and his colleagues in order to improve and strengthen the United Nations sanctions regime against UNITA. We have noted that recently the international community has been achieving ever-greater consensus on the sanctions against UNITA. Various concerted actions are being taken.

However, the sanctions against UNITA are far from being effective. Mr. Savimbi and UNITA are still using all means and channels available to bust the sanctions imposed by the Security Council. One specific example is that of the diamonds produced in the areas under its control, which are being used by UNITA in illicit arms trading. It has to be pointed out that no country, company or individual should be allowed to collude with Mr. Savimbi or UNITA in an attempt to bust the sanctions imposed by the Security Council.

As long as violations of the sanctions regime continue, peace will not come to Angola and the sufferings of the people of Angola will continue. We strongly appeal to all countries to genuinely abide by the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, by putting an end to the supply of arms or any other forms of support to UNITA and by taking other effective measures to prevent violations by their own nationals. The Chinese delegation supports the work carried out by the Panel of Experts as mandated by the Security Council.

The report that has been presented to us today by the Panel of Experts is informative. I would like to reiterate that the signal sent to us by the report is very clear: measures have to be taken to strengthen the sanctions regime. The Security Council must provide positive support in this regard. Because the report and the recommendations contained therein cover many fields, such as the political, economic, commercial and military fields, they also involve many complex issues, and we have to study the report very carefully. We support the sanctions Committee's having an in-depth consideration of the report and the recommendations contained therein so as to help the Security Council take timely and practical measures.

Like other countries, we believe that strengthening the sanctions against UNITA is in itself not our purpose. Rather, it is a tool to create the necessary conditions for a final political solution to the question of Angola. It is our hope that the international community will be able to work together, coordinate various actions and strengthen its sanctions against UNITA so as to force it to lay down its arms soon, cease all hostilities and embark upon the path towards national reconciliation at an early date.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I would first of all like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this briefing on the final report of the Panel of Experts created by resolution 1237 (1999) of 7 May 1999.

I would also like to welcome the presence at this meeting of the Minister for External Relations of Angola and of Minister of State Peter Hain of the United Kingdom.

Naturally, I also wish to thank Ambassador Fowler, Chairman of the Security Council Committee created pursuant to resolution 864 (1993), for his very detailed introductory statement, as well as the members of the Panel of Experts, whose final report we are considering today.

In the context of the initial consideration of the matter before the Council today, I wish to make the following preliminary comments.

First, Mali deplores the continuing conflict in Angola, which has lasted some 25 years and for which UNITA is primarily responsible. The Angolan people have suffered too much as a result of the war. The time has therefore come for the international community to put an end to it. From this standpoint, the report we are considering today proposes rigorous measures aimed at cutting off sources of illegal revenue obtained by UNITA from the sale of diamonds, reducing its access to petroleum supplies and limiting its procurement of arms and ammunition. In this regard, I wish to pay tribute to the tireless efforts of Ambassador Fowler to facilitate a political settlement to the Angolan crisis by restricting UNITA's ability to continue to pursue the military option.

Secondly, the report before us today shows that, notwithstanding the sanctions, UNITA has been able to evade their impact through the existence of a complex network that has made it possible for it to sidestep the sanctions and have at its disposal a formidable war machine. Various actors, including Governments, have been cited. In this regard, I would like to lend my

delegation's support to the proposal made by France concerning the follow-up to be given to the experts' recommendations.

Thirdly, the report under consideration also establishes that despite violations, the sanctions have begun to bear fruit. It is clear that the serious difficulties being experienced by UNITA with regard to fuel supplies are the result of the beneficial effects of the sanctions.

In this connection, I would like to underline that, in solidarity with the struggle of the Angolan people, Mali is resolved to seek the further strengthening of sanctions against UNITA. It is for this reason that my delegation exhorts all Members of the United Nations to look closely at the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report. We also take the view that it is important for the international community to lend its support and provide the necessary assistance to Angola's neighbours so as to support their efforts to secure better monitoring of the sanctions.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I should like to join other members of the Council in welcoming the presence among us of the Minister for External Relations of Angola, Mr. De Miranda, and the Minister of State, Foreign Office, of the United Kingdom.

I should also like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting of the Council on the situation in Angola.

I should also like to thank Ambassador Robert Fowler, Chairman of the sanctions Committee on Angola, for his introduction of the report of the Panel of Experts charged with examining violations of the sanctions imposed by the Council against UNITA.

The delegation of Tunisia welcomes the publication of the report that has been presented to us pursuant to resolution 1237 (1999). This document — which is the fruit of six months of investigations, inquiries and studies undertaken by the Panel of Experts headed by Ambassador Anders Möllander to keep the Council informed about violations of the sanctions against UNITA — illustrates, if indeed there is a need to do so, the will of the Council to ensure respect for the sanctions it imposes under the Charter.

In this connection, I would like to recall that Tunisia has supported the imposition of sanctions against UNITA,

in the belief that this tool can help us promote a settlement of the conflict by preventing UNITA from finding the means of continuing its destabilizing and violent objectives and by forcing it to comply fully and as clearly as possible with the obligations it agreed to when it signed the Lusaka accord. In this connection, we welcome the conclusion of the Panel of Experts that there has been a significant reduction in UNITA's ability to manoeuvre as a result of the pooling of the international community's efforts to ensure respect for the sanctions regime and to stop violations thereof.

The report contains numerous recommendations as to measures to be taken — notably, on the implementation of stricter mechanisms aimed at ending illicit movements of arms for UNITA's benefit and the sale and supply of the oil that feeds its war machine. Other equally important recommendations relate to the establishment of effective controls over diamond smuggling, which is the main source of financing for UNITA's war effort, as well as recommendations with regard to UNITA's representation abroad and the travel of its representatives overseas. The recommendations proposed to the Council by the Panel of Experts are designed to make the regime of sanctions on UNITA more effective. There is no doubt that they constitute a strong and unequivocal message as to the resolve of the Security Council to ensure that the international community's desire to impose peace in Angola is respected.

However, while we greatly appreciate the work done by the Panel of Experts in drafting its report, we would like to draw the Council's attention to the sensitivity of some of the information, conclusions and recommendations it contains, which, in our view, must be handled very carefully because they involve, among other things, the naming of heads of State. We would have preferred the report to avoid giving information citing certain parties, at least at this stage, so as to first be certain of its absolute veracity. In the absence of irrefutable evidence to corroborate those allegations, and until the parties concerned are allowed to provide information that may give additional clarifications for the benefit of the investigation's objectivity, we believe that it would be preferable to proceed gradually by first engaging the attention of the States and parties concerned before making suggestions or deciding on appropriate steps. I believe this approach would give the necessary credibility to the investigations of the sanctions Committee, and that credibility will certainly serve to enhance its ability to act.

The Tunisian delegation expresses the hope that the publication of certain elements in the report will lead to greater awareness on the part of the international community of the importance of strictly applying the sanctions regime and the need to persevere in efforts to cut off the sources of supplies to UNITA to force it to fulfil its obligations under the Lusaka Agreement.

The President: In view of the lateness of the hour, I would like to say in my national capacity that I will forgo this opportunity to make a national statement. I will defer it to a subsequent stage. But I will not let this opportunity pass without first thanking Ambassador Fowler for his presentation and the determination with which he pursued the matter and which brings us to this meeting and also to thank the Panel of Experts for its very thorough work. We look forward to examining its recommendations more thoroughly as we go back to the sanctions Committee.

The second point that I would like to mention here is that Bangladesh believes that in addition to their inherent merit, the recommendations are also very important and relevant and have serious implications for the general issues relating to sanctions, with which the Council is now seized, and the experts group which we have recently set up will also look into the general issues. I think the recommendations will have an important purpose to serve when that experts group takes up its responsibility.

I resume my function as the President of the Council.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Uganda, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: I now have the great pleasure to call on the Minister for External Relations of Angola, Mr. João Bernardo de Miranda.

Mr. De Miranda (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Mr. President, on behalf of my Government and myself, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I should also like to congratulate the outgoing president for the dynamic and wise manner in which he conducted the proceedings of this organ during his term in office.

Let me also take this opportunity to welcome very specially the presence in our midst of His Excellency Mr. Peter Hain, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, and to commend him for his Government's commitment and the efforts of the international community aimed at the effective implementation of the Security Council resolutions on Angola.

Once again this Council has an opportunity to address the question of Angola, one of the longest conflicts in the history of Africa, which, fortunately, is finally coming to an end. This meeting is not intended to search for any new peace solutions, for these already exist and are still valid. We are here today to assess the extent to which United Nations Member States are adhering to United Nations resolutions, and in particular to those of the Security Council, and to try to find ways to make them more effective.

The report of the Panel of Experts established by the Security Council pursuant to resolution 1237 (1999), the introduction to which we have just heard, is clear proof of what my Government has repeatedly stated in this Council: the rearming of UNITA's military wing and Mr. Savimbi's insistence on the option of war have been possible only because of the connivance of some Governments, political individuals around the world and businessmen in violating the sanctions imposed by the Security Council.

Parallel with the destruction of the social fabric and the infrastructure of Angola, we have been witnessing attempts by some political circles in various world capitals to bring about a lifting of the international pressure and cleansing the image of Mr. Savimbi, despite the

condemnation of Mr. Savimbi by the Security Council and the entire international community for being mainly responsible for the continuation of the war in Angola. In addition to gravely violating the spirit and the letter of the resolutions on sanctions, such actions are an incitement to and unequivocal encouragement of terrorism in Angola. We note with concern and apprehension that those States that harbour such political circles, although they profess to uphold the sanctions, continue to allow such practices to take place.

The violation of the sanctions regime imposed by the Security Council is in all respects a criminal act. By financing and supporting the war effort, those responsible have rendered themselves co-perpetrators of crimes against humanity committed in Angola by Jonas Savimbi. At the same time, interference in the internal affairs of other States is of particular concern because such interference is always a source of conflicts. The United Nations will never be able to fulfil its role in the area of international peace and security as long as Members continue to fail to comply with its Charter and the decisions of its organs.

By imposing mandatory sanctions against UNITA, the Security Council intended to curtail its ability to wage war and to persuade its members to embrace the democratic system. The achievement of these goals will help speedily to put an end to instability in Angola.

The report that has been submitted to the Council is the result of complex and tireless work carried out at great risk by an independent team of experts who are recognized for their moral integrity, their great and unquestioned sense of justice and their devotion to the cause of world peace.

By their nature and reach, their suggestions seek to contribute to the establishment of peace in Angola and to put an end to the insecurity now prevailing in the world. We must recognize that all of this is an imperative for which all of the members of the international society bear great responsibility.

We expect the countries mentioned in the report to react in some way, trying to deny the evidence presented against them in the report. We understand this attitude, but we would be remiss were we not to remind them that sanctions violations have resulted in a major disaster at all levels of political, social and economic life in Angola. It seems to us that at this stage, the most important thing is for the countries, organizations and individuals

mentioned to examine their own consciences and change their attitudes towards the war in Angola, ending their support for Mr. Savimbi.

We hope that from now on all of the countries, Governments and individuals mentioned will cooperate with Angola and with the United Nations, even tacitly, if they prefer, and that the whole of the international community will, in the interest of world peace, fully respect the sanctions imposed against UNITA and in this way contribute to ending the war in Angola.

The situation resulting from the international impunity of culprits who perpetrate, finance, encourage or abet atrocities against humankind is extremely bleak. In my country, we are witnessing, as I have mentioned earlier, a situation comparable to a natural disaster. We have already had some illustration of this here. Over 3 million people have been displaced and are surviving thanks to international charity. Hundreds of refugees in neighbouring countries have been abandoned to their fate, and a pattern of death and poverty has emerged that is unprecedented in Angola's recent history.

All of this has happened because of one individual by the name of Jonas Savimbi, with the support of a handful of countries and individuals — in all parts of the world, unfortunately — who are completely indifferent to the suffering of their fellow men.

We feel that appeals to their consciences or sense of duty no longer suffice. It is imperative that we take decisive action and call things by their proper names. I will say it again: crimes against humanity are being committed by Jonas Savimbi. The Organization of African Unity, the Southern African Development Community and the Non-Aligned Movement have named Jonas Savimbi as a war criminal as a result of this bleak situation.

In view of the irrefutable evidence contained in the sanctions Committee report, the Security Council must consider taking measures against those implicated.

My Government fully supports the recommendations contained in the report as a step in the right direction, and we trust that they will be included in the upcoming draft resolution of the Security Council on Angola.

Making these recommendations mandatory will once again underscore the important role that the international community should continue to play in the search for lasting peace in Angola. In current circumstances, this role should include an increase in international pressure for the greater isolation of Savimbi and the direct attribution to Mr. Savimbi of responsibility for the crimes against humanity being committed in Angola; the strengthening of sanctions against UNITA; the effective implementation of resolutions 864 (1993), 1127 (1997) and 1173 (1998); and the ensuring of the smooth functioning of the sanctions Committee.

The dynamic impetus imparted by Ambassador Robert Fowler and his team from the time he became Chairman of the sanctions Committee cannot and must not be held back, because thus far he has made a significant contribution towards reducing violations and enhancing the mobilization of various sectors of the international community in order to block the sources of financial support for terrorism in Angola. This immense effort on the part of the members of the Committee and its Chairman is fully recognized and deeply appreciated by my Government. We will continue to lend our full cooperation to the accomplishment of their task.

The President: In view of the lateness of the hour and the fact that there are as many as nine speakers remaining on my list, I should like, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting now and resume it at 3.30 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.20 p.m.



Security Council

Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4113th Meeting

Wednesday, 15 March 2000, 3.40 p.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Mársico
	Canada	Mr. Angell
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hain
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Angola

Letter dated 10 March 2000 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning the situation in Angola addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2000/203)



The meeting was resumed at 3.40 p.m.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the Council will now hear statements by those Member States that wish to make comments on the report of the Panel of Experts and to whom invitations have been extended under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

The first speaker is the representative of Burkina Faso. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): It was only yesterday evening that we were able to acquaint ourselves with the report of the Panel of Experts to investigate violations of Security Council sanctions against UNITA. My delegation regrets the fact that it was not received early enough to allow us to study it in depth and thus make a significant contribution to the debate. We shall return to this aspect of the matter later. For the time being, I wish to thank you, Sir, for having given us the floor to express our view on the work of the Panel of Experts.

The report submitted today for the consideration of the members of the Security Council — the broad coverage of which by the media before its official publication has already been the subject of a response by my Government — calls for the following preliminary comments from us.

First of all, it should be noted that the mission of the Panel of Experts to my country, Burkina Faso, in pursuit of its investigations was quite clearly botched. Indeed, when the Chairman of that Panel, Ambassador Anders Möllander, wrote to me on 11 November 1999 to propose the date of 13 December 1999, my Government suggested instead the month of January for the simple reason that the appropriate political authorities capable of responding usefully to the Panel's expectations would be unavailable on the aforementioned date, as they would be in Lomé for the summit of the Economic Community of West African States. This arrangement seemed to have been set, in particular following exchanges with the Chairman of the Sanctions Committee, when, on Friday, 3 December 1999, to our great astonishment, the Panel of Experts called from Abidjan to tell us that they were compelled to move on to Ouagadougou. Thus, as one might expect, the experts were received only by administrative officials who, quite naturally, were in no position to respond to their questions. Nevertheless, in Lomé, where they subsequently travelled, the experts were received at great length by our Minister

for Foreign Affairs. Clearly, however, from Togo he was in no position to accede to their request to visit certain supposedly suspicious locations that they wished to investigate. Thus, we are baffled by the report's assertion in paragraph 21 that the Burkinabé authorities turned down on the spot the request of the Panel to investigate the airport at Bobo-Dioulasso. These details, which are not unimportant, appear nowhere in the report, thus giving the impression of a deliberate desire on the part of the Burkinabé authorities not to cooperate. Is it possible that all this was done to embarrass and put them in a helpless position, so that they might be accused later of refusing to cooperate?

Moreover, Ambassador Fowler will remember that, out of concern for the transparency of my country's position, I proposed in an interview with him that the Panel of Experts should return to Burkina Faso. He saw no objection to this and even suggested to me that, should such a fresh visit prove impossible, Burkina Faso could provide by writing any information that the experts might request.

I needed to recall all this to demonstrate the extent to which it is difficult to consider the work done by the Panel of Experts in Burkina Faso as particularly meticulous. And yet, for one thing, the accusations levelled at my country are founded on the results of that mission. For another, we note that the thrust of the report of the Panel of Experts is based on allegations made by UNITA defectors — in other words, by people who had become the enemies of their former leader, Jonas Savimbi, and whose judgment, necessarily coloured by rancour and perhaps by the spirit of vengeance, cannot help but be biased and partial.

On the basis of this consideration alone, how can we put stock in such allegations? For the sake of our Organization's credibility, an inquiry report of this importance — and, one might say, gravity, since it implicates countries and heads of State — must be based strictly on precise, tangible, verified and verifiable facts secured in an impartial and transparent process. However, with all due respect to the members of the Panel of Experts, this report seems to be built on allusions rather than on certainties. It will be noted, for example, that most facts lack dates and are often flawed by a lack of concordance and consistency. For instance, with respect to paragraph 10 of the report, General Bandua, the chief witness against Burkina Faso, was fully aware that the Angolan Government had been informed

that he was to be questioned by the experts. What credence can we give to such testimony?

Our reading of the report leaves us with the sense of a certain degree of partiality based on a presumption of the guilt of some countries and leaders and of the innocence of others. Otherwise, how can we explain this ill-considered focus primarily on three African countries thousands of kilometres from the theatre of operations? By apparent coincidence, these three incriminated countries are in the same geographical area and are, moreover, French-speaking. Let us call things by their proper names.

We could expatiate at length on the partiality of the report, but we do not wish to tax the Council's patience, especially since it appears that we will have the opportunity to return to this matter.

Nevertheless, we wish to raise three points. The members of the Committee carried out their enquiries in Europe, the United States, Israel and elsewhere. Why does the report remain silent in this regard? It seems strange that it is mainly African countries that are mentioned, given that the report refers to them only as relay points or intermediaries. What about those at the top? What about the main sources? What about the final destinations? What about those who benefit at the end of the chain of command?

The Panel of Experts considered the question of mercenaries with UNITA as being very important. Despite that, and although the Panel constantly received relevant information in this respect, the experts on the Panel say that they were not able to verify such information. Did they even bother to interview the representatives of the Executive Outcomes company, or even to question certain countries about this important issue?

There seems to be a clear desire to obscure facts and to exculpate certain important actors. The report itself states, in paragraph 12, "Inevitably, a number of actors, including important ones, will have escaped direct mention." If they are important actors, why have they escaped mention? And why is that "inevitable"?

Let us now consider what the report calls UNITA's use of diamonds to buy friends and supporters, as set out in paragraphs 99 to 104. The experts attest to having received first-hand testimony which makes it possible for them to name several heads of State. According to paragraph 12 of the report, one of the principles adopted by the Panel is that a fact can be validated only if it is

corroborated by at least two sources of information. The accusation levelled at the President of Burkina Faso is based on the testimony of one individual alone, Mr. Bandua. Why, in that specific case, did the Panel not follow its own rationale, its own principle? Here it is practising double standards.

Once again, we would like to welcome the initiative of the Security Council in setting up the Panel of Experts, because, ultimately, it is concerned with bringing out the truth. But in our opinion, any investigation must be based on a rigorous, fair and reliable foundation.

Burkina Faso believes that the report of the Panel of Experts does not comply with the rigorous scientific requirements of that approach. Furthermore, given the sensitive nature and the gravity of the accusations made, we believe that the States concerned should have had the opportunity, even before the report was issued, to respond, and that such responses should have been included in the final report. That would at least have had the merit of transparency and, in particular, of fairness.

We object to the conclusions of the report of the Panel of Experts, and especially to those which accuse our head of State by name. Before this Council, we reaffirm the denial issued by our Government on 12 March.

Perhaps my country's only fault — which has caused so much acrimony on the part of certain States — is that it is one of the few countries as yet to dare to think that any solution to bring peace to Angola cannot exclude negotiation.

Nowhere in the report is there any mention of the Angolan people. However, in the end, it is their destiny that matters. On the other hand, there are numerous references to diamonds.

We would therefore like to ask several questions. Who is benefiting from the embargo? Who is buying UNITA's diamonds? Who is manufacturing weapons and selling them to UNITA, which is buying them with diamond money? Such questions — and many more — should have been elucidated in the report. Many small countries, including mine, would like to have answers.

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm my country's commitment to the relevant decisions of our shared Organization, the United Nations, and to state once again

that Burkina Faso will join in any initiative aimed at achieving peace and that it will do its utmost to help to achieve that objective in Angola, in Africa and throughout the world.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Togo. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kpotsra (Togo) (spoke in French): Allow me first of all to congratulate you warmly, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am sure that your country, Bangladesh, will make a positive contribution to the work of this body during your term of office.

I should also like to thank the members of the Security Council for giving me an opportunity to speak during this debate on the situation in Angola and to let them know, on a preliminary basis, my observations on the report of the Panel of Experts set up in accordance with Security Council resolution 1237 (1999). Naturally, my country reserves the right to provide the Security Council with any necessary additional information at a later stage.

I should first like to say a few words about the people of Angola and all of those who are suffering from the civil war in that country. The most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2000/23) stated that there are 3.7 million victims of the conflict, 2 million of whom have been displaced. That report also indicates, in paragraph 15, that in Angola, "various military elements, including UNITA, have been responsible for the looting of crops and destruction of property".

Togo profoundly wishes for peace to return to that country and for a political solution to be quickly found to the conflict, which has lasted too long. We sincerely hope that both parties to the conflict, the Government and UNITA, will recognize the possible role that the United Nations could play.

During the most recent meeting on this issue, on 18 January, the Chairman of the sanctions Committee was so kind as to provide us with a video presentation worthy of the sorry episodes of the Moscow trials, showing UNITA defectors bearing witness. Today, the Council has before it the report of the Panel of Experts responsible for studying violations of sanctions against UNITA.

While condemning the flimsy and selective nature of the accusations in the report, I should like to make two

comments. First, it should be emphasized that, normally, anyone bringing an action in a court or making an accusation against a third party has an obligation to prove the facts. It is the person bringing the charge who must provide the evidence, not the other way around.

Secondly, almost all of the serious accusations against Togo are based on declarations made by deserters and defectors from UNITA, namely, General Bandua, Colonel Alcides Lucas Kangunga, alias Kallias, Colonel Aristides Kangunga, brother of the aforementioned, and Mr. Araujo Sakaita. I would point out, that contrary to what is said in the report in footnote 5 to paragraph 9, where the latter is said to be "a son of Jonas Savimbi", who "broke with UNITA and returned to Angola from Lomé in October 1999", the student Araujo Sakaita was kidnapped in October 1999, when he was 19 years old.

This kidnapping was followed by an attempt, on 19 November 1999, to kidnap his younger brother, Eloy Sakaita, who was 17 years old at the time. Thwarted by the Togolese security services, this attack was carried out by Mr. Manuel da Silva Casimiro, the Second Secretary in the Angolan embassy in Lagos. Arrested and indicted, he then said that he was acting on his own, in order to get a promotion, following the example of those who had carried out the first kidnapping.

I would also like to stress in particular the working methods followed. Unfortunately, the working methods consisted of compiling rumours, hearsay and gossip that were then regarded as being verified because they were confirmed by UNITA defectors. How can one give any credence to allegations made by such people when they all subsequently joined the Government army? Is it not in their interest, just for the sake of survival, to repeat what others, trained in the best schools of the cold war, have whispered to them?

In one of those very few cases where the information given by a defector, in this case General Bandua, was indeed verified by the Panel of Experts, the information proved to be unfounded. To be specific, let me refer to paragraph 40 of the report:

"General Bandua stated that he thought that BM-27 (Hurricane) Multiple Launch Rocket system had come from Ukraine, via Togo. However, the Government of Ukraine reported that there were no authorized arms sales from Ukraine to Togo during the relevant period."

On this point, the report concludes again in paragraph 40:

"The Panel's investigation turned up no evidence that the Government of Ukraine sold arms or otherwise provided military assistance directly or indirectly to UNITA."

So why does the Panel not exonerate Togo in this case in the same way as it exonerated Ukraine?

The absolute lack of rigour in the approach taken can be seen again from paragraphs 101 and 102 of the report, in which the Panel of Experts claims that payments were made in the form of diamonds. No date is given, which is hardly astonishing since the facts are invented. Assuming, however, that the sanctions Committee would like to ask us for additional explanations, we would like to know the specific dates of the meetings that are mentioned. Did the meetings all occur after 28 August 1997, the date on which the Security Council adopted resolution 1127 (1997) prohibiting travel by members of UNITA? And the supposed exchange of the diamonds, did that happen after 12 June 1998, when the Security Council adopted resolution 1173 (1998) prohibiting the transfer of diamonds held by UNITA?

Yet such a generously financed body should really take a more rigorous approach that particularly takes into account the gradual evolution of the sanctions imposed and the way they progressively became more diversified.

Then in paragraph 64 of the report, we are virtually accused of being "solicited", along with Burkina Faso and Zambia, by UNITA with a view to providing it with petroleum products. "Solicited" obviously does not mean that we agreed to do this, and the Panel of Experts is careful not to accuse us on this particular score. But, nevertheless, the damage is done, the seeds of doubt were sown.

I, too, could take information from here and there and proclaim it loudly in all directions from the rooftops. For example, I could speak of the content of the excellent report from the Canadian non-governmental organization Partnership Africa-Canada on diamond trafficking in Sierra Leone and say that the De Beers diamond company — which, curiously, is so seldom cited in the report of the Panel but which controls between 80 and 90 per cent of the world diamond trade — acquired, in 1999, 35 per cent of the Ekati mine in Canada, which is to represent 6 per cent of world production in the years to come.

I could also mention the case of Sierra Leone, for while there is no Canadian interest in the case of Angola, in Sierra Leone there are three Canadian companies — Rex Diamond Mining Corporation, Am Can Mineral Limited and Diamond Works — which have all been operating in Sierra Leone. I could say that those in charge of the Rex Diamond Mining Corporation, which was registered on 14 September 1985 in Toronto, have publicly boasted of their privileged relations with Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

These are proven facts that I am citing. Should I conclude from all this that the Government supports RUF? Would I go and write such a thing without asking for the view of the country concerned? This, nonetheless, is what has been done in the case of Togo, and I ask all the members of the Security Council to think about this.

Let me come back to the working methods of the Panel. My country attaches great importance to this. We sincerely believe in the neutrality of the United Nations. On several occasions the report accuses my country of having hosted the family of Mr. Savimbi, including his children, in violation of existing sanctions. We do not deny this fact, but unless we enter the logic of personal vendetta, we do not see how children can be held responsible for the actions of their fathers. It is, however, clear that if the children were on the list drawn up by the sanctions Committee, we would immediately take the necessary steps to expel them from our country. But would the United Nations venture to proceed along this road and deny the right to life and the right to education to children whose parents are — at a given moment, because things do change in life — presumed guilty of certain crimes. The devastating consequences for innocent civilians of the sanctions imposed and applied blindly against Libya and Iraq, for example, make us shudder at the very idea.

In any case, let the Security Council and the sanctions Committee shoulder their responsibilities, and I assure the Council that we will shoulder ours. Certainly we can be accused of many things — of advocating dialogue in order to foster peace on our continent, and of rightly refusing to hurl anathema on certain individuals — but I do not believe we can honestly be accused of having violated existing sanctions.

Turning again to the selective nature of the accusations by the Panel of Experts, I would like to note and deplore the fact that many countries that have long been known to be involved in violations of sanctions

relating to Angola are deliberately omitted from the report, and sometimes mitigating circumstances are invoked by the Panel in favour of certain Governments or countries. One cannot otherwise understand how in paragraph 142, for example, the Panel of Experts can allow itself to say, "the current military leadership in Abidjan is said to be close to Savimbi and very sympathetic to UNITA." But there is not a word about the considerable influence brought to bear by distinguished individuals on spheres of power or on the decision-making process in certain countries.

Also, one could well wonder about the relevance of omissions in recommendation 34 of the Panel, where nothing is said about certain subregional organizations to which the Council is invited to submit the report, as though to imply that there is a certain hostility on the part the members of these subregional organizations vis-à-vis the peace process in Angola.

I now come to the investigations undertaken in my country. I should point out, since the Panel of Experts did not deem it opportune to do so, that the period of 8 to 11 December 1999 was slated for the visit to Lomé of three members of the Panel. Unfortunately, that coincided with the summit of the West African Monetary Union, which was followed by the conference of heads of State of the Economic Community of West African States. We therefore proposed to the Chairman of the Panel to delay the visit slightly and to come after 10 December. However, the three experts did not heed our suggestion and kept to their initial plan as though their presence alone meant that all the competent national departments should be available to them regardless of the summits being held. As a result, it was not until a few hours before their departure on 11 December that the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of my country and the chief of police met with them, twice.

Having some information on the violations cited in connection with the UNITA meeting, the Togolese side gave its reactions. Responding to information regarding the welcoming of Mr. Savimbi on his arrival at Lomé on 17 November. The Togolese side provided evidence to show that the Government was at that time meeting in the Council of Ministers at Kara, in the north of Togo, and that there it met President Alpha Oumar Konaré of Mali. Obviously, if Mr. Savimbi had landed at Lomé on the same day aboard a military aircraft, accompanied by Mr. Jean-Pierre Bemba — leader of the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC) — he certainly did not receive a welcoming ceremony commensurate with his presumed rank.

Apart from the rather disconcerting frivolity with which the Experts — entrusted by the Council to work on a noble cause — offered these accusations against States, and above all against heads of States, leaks were cunningly orchestrated to make the report available to the media; there were attempts to set States and subregions against each other; and there was an impression of collusion between the interests of a country that has an official mandate and the implementation of sanctions against UNITA. These are elements that could significantly affect the credibility of the Security Council and of the United Nations. I think this should be remedied immediately.

As far as Togo is concerned, we have always affirmed and reaffirmed our commitment to the United Nations, to the ideals of the Charter and to peace in Africa. We have always advocated cooperation between the Angolan and Togolese security services. I am happy to be able to tell the Council that an Angolan delegation visited Togo last week, specifically from 4 to 10 March 2000. The delegation visited a number of locations that the international brainwashing campaign has identified as being involved in violations of the sanctions against UNITA. It went to the Commando de Kpéwa National Training Centre, in the north of Togo, which was established in 1975 and has already provided training for and graduated over nine classes of monitors and commando instructors, both nationals and foreigners. Is this not evidence of Togo's commitment to transparency in inter-State relations? Is this not an indication of our willingness to dispel all misunderstandings and to contribute to the relaunching of the peace process in Angola?

I cannot conclude my statement without stressing, for the benefit of those who have called for it, that just as they would not be inclined to interfere in the way in which the Innuits of Labrador or the Nisga'a people of British Columbia are ruled over, so are Africans loathe to accept directives or injunctions from individuals who come from elsewhere — whatever mandate they may have taken on. Until the contrary is proved, the future of the Organization of African Unity remains in the hands of Africans.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the importance my country attaches to achieving lasting peace in Angola. Would not the energies we are now expending in accusing each other, in defending ourselves and in indicting each other not be better utilized in favour of that objective?

The President: Then next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Rwanda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda): My delegation wishes to commend the President, and his predecessors, for the work he is doing and for presiding over this body. We hope he will bring its deliberations to wise conclusions.

We also wish to express support for the mission of the Committee on sanctions and for its Chairman's commitment to gather information and recommendations for the Council to work on.

The Government of Rwanda has, like other Members of the United Nations, just learned of the contents of the report of the Panel of Experts on Angola sanctions. I wish to recall that when the Panel of Experts was constituted, it was given the following mandate: to collect information and investigate reports relating to the violation of sanctions imposed against UNITA with respect to arms and related material, mercenaries and other forms of military assistance to UNITA; to collect information and investigate reports relating to the violation of sanctions imposed against UNITA with respect to petroleum and petroleum products, diamonds, and the movement of UNITA funds; to identify parties aiding and abetting the violation of Security Council sanctions against UNITA; and to recommend measures to end such violations and improve implementation of the sanctions imposed by the Council against UNITA.

While reserving its right to express its views on the entirety of the report of the Panel of Experts in writing, there are some sections of it to which the Government of Rwanda wishes to react to immediately, today. These are contained in paragraphs 25, 26, 50, 67, 82, 83, 107, 148, 155 and 156. In those paragraphs, the Panel of Experts is making very wild allegations about Rwanda's cooperation with UNITA. Those allegations could be summed up as having to do with military cooperation, arranging diamond sales and facilitating meetings with weapons brokers.

The Rwanda Government wishes to state categorically that these allegations have no foundation and are merely hearsay from quarters that distort facts for reasons known only to themselves. What is also very clear is that contrary to its mandate to investigate reports, even where the Panel was given clarifications, those were not taken aboard, as is evidenced throughout the report. When the Panel visited Rwanda, it was given information and explanations — which are not even mentioned as having taken place — and

we wonder how and why the Panel has decided to leave them out of the report.

Generally speaking, the report is misleading. It has a lot of confusion and contradictions due to poor sources of information and useless details. There are many examples to illustrate this lack of consistency, but because of the constraints of time we will detail them to the Security Council in writing.

For the record, the Rwandan Government wishes to make it clear that there is no military cooperation with UNITA. The fact that Rwandan troops used Angolan territory to evacuate Rwandan troops did not necessarily mean a pact with Savimbi. Angola knows how we evacuated our troops in a successful military rescue operation. I insist on this. Nobody ever had contact with Savimbi, or with any UNITA officials for that matter. It could have been the first one, and thank God it never happened. To suggest, as the report does, especially in paragraph 26, that some Rwandan troops stayed together with UNITA forces is simply a blatant lie with no logic at all.

There is absolutely no truth to the allegation in paragraph 26 of the report that Rwandans "have allowed UNITA to operate more or less freely in Kigali for the purposes of arranging diamond sales". Also, individuals mentioned in paragraphs 26 and 148 had no business contacts with Rwandan authorities. I insist on that. This allegation is another result of rather vague, non-specific, unresearched and unverified information. This raises serious questions.

The Panel of Experts owes the Security Council better investigations, instead of a simplistic "Mobutu versus Kabila" factor, as to why Rwanda is allegedly dealing with UNITA today. This is wrong and an intellectually lazy way of thinking and of patching stories together to discredit someone and a country that, as rightly expressed by the report, had never had any contacts with Savimbi or his movement before. History should take them somewhere else — not to Rwanda, the ever-surviving poor victim of all United Nations failures.

Rwanda formally challenges the Panel to produce concrete evidence of the unfounded and uncalled-for allegations, and wishes to reiterate its commitment to the resolutions of this body and of the United Nations as a whole. The burden of proof falls on the Panel to give evidence to the Security Council, and to the countries mentioned in the report, in order to substantiate these

allegations, and Rwanda should be allowed, like any other Member of the United Nations, to work on its continued support for sanctions against UNITA.

Rwanda still believes that the Angolan people have suffered enough and wishes to reiterate its support for whatever needs to be done to bring peace and security to Angola and the region.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of South Africa. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, very much for hosting this meeting today. We believe that this is an important meeting, and we are pleased that you are able to invite us to participate in it.

The South African Government welcomes the report of the Panel on violations of Security Council sanctions against UNITA. In the coming weeks, my Government will be studying this report with great care, and we look forward to the following meetings at which the sanctions Committee will discuss this same subject. At the same time, we look forward to receiving more evidence on the allegations that are contained in the report. We support all the United Nations sanctions against UNITA and shall continue to work closely with the United Nations for the success of these measures in order to secure a peaceful solution to the conflict in Angola.

We are aware that some of our citizens have been involved in efforts aimed at undermining the United Nations sanctions. We shall take firm action against those involved. South Africa will continue to advocate a political solution to the conflict in Angola, as we remain convinced that there can be no lasting military solution. We once again urge UNITA to abandon war and embrace peace.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Bulgaria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sotirov (Bulgaria): I would like to extend my gratitude to Ambassador Robert Fowler for the informative presentation he made this morning with regard to the outcome of the activities of the Panel of Experts on violations of Security Council sanctions against UNITA.

Since the report of the Panel, contained in document S/2000/203 of 10 March 2000, distributed yesterday, has

references to my country, I feel obliged to take the floor and to share with the members of the Security Council my preliminary observations on it. At the same time, I would like to reserve the right of my delegation to respond more comprehensively to the accusations raised against my country at a later stage.

Allow me at the outset to express my Government's frustration with the violation of the established procedure requiring all countries concerned to be acquainted first with the report, before it is given to the mass media. We hope that the way in which this document was issued will not set a precedent in the activities of the Council.

In order to avoid similar unacceptable situations in the future, my delegation would like to put forward for consideration two concrete proposals. First, the Chairman of the relevant body should not only bear the primary responsibility for the content of the report, but he or she should be responsible for any unauthorized leakage. Secondly, to assist the Chairman of the relevant body in fulfilling this responsibility, the document should be given to the interested States mentioned in it in the original language in which it was produced at the same time or before it is given to the Secretariat for translation and general distribution.

After these procedural remarks, I would like to bring to the Council's attention that the report of the Panel of Experts was duly forwarded to the respective Bulgarian authorities for further consideration, examination and analysis. However, it is absolutely clear at this point that, despite some speculation in the mass media, the report does not, and could not, contain even a single piece of concrete evidence linking Bulgaria as a State or its State policy with any violation of Security Council resolution 864 (1993) or of the internationally recognized standards and norms of arms control regimes. The report itself states in paragraph 15 that

"arms procurement by UNITA was not by means of direct contact between UNITA and arms producing countries." (S/2000/203).

The Bulgarian Government has extended its full support to the Security Council resolutions on Angola, and our political position with regard to UNITA and the situation in Angola has been categorically confirmed by our adherence to the declarations and decisions made by the European Union on this issue. Bulgaria has demonstrated its willingness to fully cooperate with and assist the sanctions Committee and the Panel of Experts

established to investigate violations of sanctions against UNITA.

During the visit of the Expert Panel — led by its Chairman, Mr. Anders Möllander — to Bulgaria from 19 to 21 January 2000, a number of meetings were held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economy and the Interdepartmental Council at the Council of Ministers. The latter is the only authorized licensing body in Bulgaria in the area of arms trade. Comprehensive and substantial written information was provided, including a response to the additional inquiries, which was submitted to the Panel on 11 February last. All information thus presented to the Panel attests to the fact that the Bulgarian authorities have acted in strict compliance with domestic legislation and with the Security Council resolutions on Angola.

That is why we would like to share with the Council our great concern in respect to the following. It is our full conviction that the States that extend their full support and assistance to control and monitoring bodies should not be punished by the distortion and misinterpretation of the information they submit to the experts, whatever the reasons for such handling of the facts. One might even get the impression, on the other hand, that the countries that did not provide substantive information in a timely manner are on the safe side, since they are not being extensively referred to in the report. Such an approach is totally unacceptable and is harmful to the effective monitoring of the implementation of the Security Council resolutions. It can only discourage the willingness, and increase the cautiousness, of those Governments with regard to the activities of the expert bodies. These bodies should pursue their mandates with objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity, and they should base their findings and recommendations on sound legal evidence.

Let me at this stage briefly comment on some of the major allegations raised in the report that involve Bulgaria. First, the assumption that the arms transaction referred to in paragraph 38 of the report was carried out is groundless. The deal was cancelled when the end-user certificate believed to be provided by the Ministry of Defence of Zambia was proved false. The equipment mentioned in that paragraph can still be found and verified in the storage premises of the Ministry of Defence of Bulgaria. The approach followed by the Panel in this case raises serious doubts about the credibility of the information sources used in the preparation of the report.

Secondly, no legal obstacles were seen to the arms supply to Togo cited in paragraph 42 of the report, since

the country was not subject to an arms embargo, either by the Security Council or by the European Union. Furthermore, the transaction was approved on the basis of genuine end-user certificates submitted by the Ministry of Defence of Togo.

Thirdly, the training of Zairian military officers in Bulgaria took place on the basis of a bilateral agreement between the two Ministries of Defence in 1996, when no restrictions applied to military cooperation of this type.

Having said this, on behalf of the Bulgarian Government, I categorically reject as absolutely unfounded and unacceptable any accusations raised or presumed in the report of the Expert Panel of possible violations by my country of the Security Council sanctions against UNITA.

As we have repeatedly declared in recent years, Bulgaria has been applying the most stringent controls to its foreign arms trade, based on a specific law adopted by Parliament in 1996. Each foreign transaction in arms and dual-use goods and technologies is considered and approved on an individual basis, after a meticulous review of the required documents. This legally binding procedure is strictly observed. The established regulations for export control licensing are being consistently improved, with the aim of achieving the standards of the European Union in this regard. A legislative amendment is currently being put on the high-priority agenda of the Government and Parliament for the first half of this year. The amendment is intended to introduce more developed mechanisms for the control and implementation of international restrictions imposed on the arms trade with regard to specific countries and regions.

Not only is Bulgaria active in the improvement of its national legislation, but it is sparing no effort to enhance international and regional cooperation in this area. A regional conference on export controls was held in December 1999 in Sofia, at the initiative of the Bulgarian Government, under the auspices of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. The Conference adopted two important political documents: a joint declaration on responsible arms transfers and a statement on harmonization of end-user certificates. The 12 participating countries agreed on a number of concrete measures to combat illicit arms trafficking in the region, thus contributing to the fulfilment of the common goal of the international community in this field.

Finally, I would like to assure the Council that the Bulgarian Government will seriously consider the report and is ready to cooperate further with the Security Council Committee on sanctions against UNITA.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Zambia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kasanda (Zambia): My delegation wishes to congratulate the Panel of Experts on violations of Security Council sanctions against UNITA for the great amount of work they put into compiling the report which is before the Security Council today. Special thanks, of course, go to Ambassador Fowler for the leadership role he continues to play to ensure that the sanctions imposed by the Security Council against UNITA not only remain effective but are tightened.

My delegation wishes to reiterate the Zambian Government's commitment to ensuring peace in our region. As such, we will remain opposed to actions that could reinforce conflict in neighbouring countries. Peace and stability must return to Angola without any further suffering of the Angolan people. To this effect, my Government will fully cooperate with all efforts by the international community to ensure compliance with the Security Council sanctions against UNITA.

With regard to the contents of the report itself, I wish to state that a number of the suggestions and recommendations made will certainly prove effective in ensuring that sanctions are further tightened in order to completely diminish UNITA's ability to wage war. The report, however, has just come out, and many Governments, including my own, have not had a chance to study and consider it fully. My Government will therefore comment on the report at an appropriate time.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Morocco. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Zahid (Morocco) (spoke in French): As this is the first time I have had the opportunity to address the Council since you, Sir, assumed the presidency, I do not want to miss this opportunity to convey to you the warmest congratulations of Morocco and of the Moroccan delegation. We are convinced that thanks to your diplomatic skills and experience, and your thorough knowledge of the United Nations, you will successfully

conduct our work and the work of the Council throughout this month.

Allow me also to convey the Moroccan delegation's congratulations to Ambassador Fowler on the report that he, in his capacity as Chairman of the Security Council sanctions Committee on Angola, introduced to the Council.

We also thank the Council for having acceded to our request to have an opportunity to clarify the situation concerning a reference — a minor one, certainly, but it is a reference nonetheless — to the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and to Morocco.

In paragraph 123 of the report, the Panel indicates that it learned that in 1995 Mr. Savimbi had placed \$250,000 with UNITA's representative in Morocco, and that additional payments were made later. The same paragraph indicates that at least some Moroccan officials knew of the initial deposit, which, according to the report itself, occurred prior to the imposition of sanctions on UNITA. And paragraph 125 concludes that the Panel

"noted the apparent absence of any action by Morocco to track down or freeze UNITA assets that had been transferred to that country with the knowledge of Moroccan officials".

Here there is an error in the French text, which instead of saying "*des fonctionnaires*", should say "*de fonctionnaires*". We are not talking about all the officials, just some of them, as the report previously states.

In order to dispel any ambiguity and to clarify the situation, I would like to inform the Council that the funds referred to in the report were completely exhausted before the imposition of sanctions. As regards the UNITA representative who is mentioned, we have already formally reported to the sanctions Committee and its Chairman that this person left Morocco a long time ago, and I would like to confirm this today.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm Morocco's support for all the efforts of the international community — beginning first and foremost with our Council — to restore peace, stability and prosperity to the fraternal country of Angola, which has suffered excessively from the torments of war.

The President: I thank the representative of Morocco for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Belarus. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sychov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Allow me first of all to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and for allowing us to address the Council on such an important matter.

The Government of the Republic of Belarus welcomes the efforts made by Ambassador Fowler of Canada, Chairman of the Security Council sanctions Committee on Angola. We welcome his efforts to establish an effective mechanism for putting pressure on UNITA in the interest of stabilizing the situation in Angola. The importance of today's meeting was underlined by the statements made here by the United Kingdom Minister of State, Mr. Hain, and by the Angolan Minister for External Relations, Mr. Miranda, and by other representatives in the Council.

In the view of the Belarus Government, Ambassador Fowler's idea of establishing this panel of experts to thoroughly investigate the implementation of the sanctions against UNITA was a new and unusual step. It will certainly help mobilize further efforts of the international community to ensure strict compliance with the sanctions regimes imposed by the Security Council.

The Panel's report presented to the Council today is of fundamental importance. The facts and recommendations contained therein must be studied most carefully, and relevant measures should then be adopted both by the Members of the United Nations and by the Council.

At this stage, I would like to offer a few preliminary comments on the report. Belarus is one of the States that the Chairman of the Expert Panel, Ambassador Möllander, visited in early February of this year. I would like to note that the Government of the Republic of Belarus allowed Mr. Möllander's Panel the opportunity to study comprehensively the work of the border and customs authorities of Belarus, the work of the Foreign Ministry and the system of export controls imposed to comply with the provisions of Security Council resolutions involving Angola.

The Government of the Republic of Belarus prepared detailed answers in response to the follow-up questions that were asked by the Panel while it was in Minsk. Since the

Panel had not set any specific time-frame for the submission of the information, our response was made available to the Chairman of the sanctions Committee and of the Panel Chairman, Mr. Möllander, immediately after the competent authorities in our Republic had prepared this response. Ambassador Fowler discussed this today.

At the same time, we are sorry to see that the Panel's report does not note the unwavering and strict commitment of the Republic of Belarus to comply with the sanctions regimes imposed by the Security Council. Nor does the report reflect the fact that the Panel did not uncover any violations by Belarus of the provisions of the Council's resolutions. In this connection, we would like to note that additional information was submitted on 29 February — exhaustive information on all the questions that had been asked by the Panel — and the Expert Panel's report was issued on 10 March. We hope that subsequent documents from the Panel of Experts and from the Security Council will contain the relevant information in this regard.

In conclusion, allow me once again to emphasize that the Republic of Belarus always has, does and will strictly comply with all decisions of the Security Council, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and other international legal instruments. The Government of the Republic of Belarus intends to cooperate tirelessly with the Sanctions Committee, the Panel of Experts and the Council as a whole in the hope of achieving a political settlement to the conflict in Angola.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Belgium. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Adam (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium has read with the greatest attention the report of the Panel of Experts before us on today's agenda.

Our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Louis Michel, is in Luanda today and has had a lengthy interview with the President of the Republic of Angola. I can assure the Council that our two Governments approach the question of sanctions in the same way.

We are aware of the unspeakable suffering of the children, men and women of Angola. That is why Belgium is committed firmly and unreservedly to the objectives pursued by the authors of the report and believes, as they do, that the effectiveness of and

monitoring mechanisms for Security Council sanctions must be improved. In this spirit, Belgium regrets the omission of important information from the report, as well as the inclusion therein of some unfounded references.

The Government of Belgium has indeed assumed its responsibilities and has taken United Nations sanctions very seriously from the moment they have been imposed. Three important elements with respect to the actions of my Government seem to be lacking from the report.

After several internal preparatory meetings, an interdepartmental working group referred to in the report — the so-called “diamond task force” — was established in January 2000. This task force has met five times since the beginning of the year. It includes representatives of all Belgian ministries and departments concerned. It has studied and decided upon several measures to improve the mechanism monitoring the provenance of diamonds. These measures consist, *inter alia*, of enhanced monitoring by customs authorities and the Ministry of Economic Affairs, as well as the establishment, together with the Luanda authorities, of a certification mechanism. Other administrative measures are under consideration by the task force.

We did not, however, wait for the creation of the task force to strengthen the existing controls, which had already led to the seizure of illegal diamonds. Following upon the actions undertaken since then by the task force, customs and judicial investigations have been initiated with regard to various persons suspected of illegal diamond trading.

Moreover, in a discussion which the Minister for Foreign Affairs had recently with the management of the Diamond High Council, the latter undertook to revise its procedures at the request of the Belgian Government. It was decided, *inter alia*, to create a second working group, to include representatives of the Belgian Government and the Diamond High Council, to draft a programme of action and determine measures to be taken.

Furthermore, the Belgian Government has fully cooperated with the Chairman of the Sanctions Committee from the outset. In February this year, the Chairman of the Sanctions Committee was informed orally and in writing of the most recent measures undertaken by the Government, thus bringing up to date the information available to the Committee. Finally, these measures were made public on 3 March in a press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Brussels.

Information has been provided to the Panel of Experts on Belgians or other people operating abroad who might hold Belgian nationality. Unfortunately, the report makes no mention of this cooperation or of the drafting currently under way of an effective Belgian bill on extraterritoriality for crimes related to the illegal diamonds trade. Moreover, a protocol agreement exists between the Diamond High Council and the judicial authorities in charge of prosecuting diamond-related crimes.

The Panel claims to have found that

“the extremely lax controls and regulations governing the Antwerp market facilitate and perhaps even encourage illegal trading activity”.
(S/2000/203, para. 87)

However, Belgium is the only — I emphasize only — country of the European Union with a binding licensing system for the import and export of diamonds, based on two laws of 1962 and several royal and ministerial decrees of 1987, 1993, 1995 and 1997. The entire trade in diamonds with countries not members of the European Union is subject to this system. There is also a monitoring mechanism for all diamond trading within the European Union.

The Belgian Government is accordingly surprised to find no, or at best only partial mention in the report of these various measures, despite the fact that information on them was conveyed in due time. Thus, the reference to the

“unwillingness of the responsible authorities in Belgium effectively to police the smuggling of illegal Angolan diamonds onto the market” (*ibid.*, para. 108)

would not appear to reflect the true state of affairs.

Another point I wish to make refers to the entirely erroneous assertion in paragraph 88 of the report that an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 diamond dealers in Antwerp operate in a so-called “grey” market outside the regulatory framework. All importers and exporters of diamonds are required to enrol with the Department of Licenses in Antwerp, which is under the direct responsibility of the Belgian Ministry of Economic Affairs. This is not the case for jewellers — in Belgium or anywhere else, for that matter — a distinction that was apparently lost on the authors of the report.

Although reference is made in the report to the fundamental problem of identifying the origin of diamonds — particularly in paragraphs 98 and 92 — this extremely complex issue is insufficiently elaborated and clearly underestimated in the report.

The Belgian Government welcomes the recommendation made in paragraph 113 that a conference of experts convene for the purpose of determining a system of controls that would allow for increased transparency and accountability in the control of diamonds from the source or origin to the bourses. We will participate and ensure that Belgian expertise contributes to such an endeavour.

In conclusion, I wish generally to emphasize Belgium's appreciation of the clear and specific language of the report, which will help to modernize the working methods of the Security Council. At the same time, we regret that the report makes no mention of the factual information — of fundamental importance to us — that was conveyed by my delegation here in New York and during the visits of its authors to Brussels and Antwerp.

I thank Ambassador Fowler for the additional points he made on this matter in his oral briefing, but, frankly, I should have preferred them to appear in the report. Belgium accordingly requests that, when the Security Council resumes its discussion, the report be brought up to date to take the factors I have indicated into account.

Finally, Belgium reiterates its full readiness to work in close cooperation with the Sanctions Committee. We share the idea that armed conflicts must be resolved through a political approach, without ignoring — as the report does — the perverse economic mechanisms that feed conflicts.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Uganda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda): First of all, let me congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of this body, and commend you for convening this meeting, which is discussing a subject that is very important in our region. My delegation also welcomes the presence here today of the Minister for External Relations of the Government of Angola and of the Minister with responsibility for Africa of the Government of the United Kingdom.

The Government of Uganda welcomes this report (S/2000/203), which is very important. We welcome the recommendations therein, because we believe they will strengthen the sanctions regime against UNITA. However, my Government expresses its regret that, in spite of extensive discussions which the Panel of Experts held with Ugandan officials last month, all the information that was exchanged and provided was ignored. The Panel, apparently, remained unconvinced, and went ahead and reproduced the allegations. For that reason, I take this opportunity to present to this Council and to you, Mr. President, the record of the discussions that took place in Uganda on 16 February.

The Panel of Experts to investigate violations of sanctions imposed against UNITA visited Uganda from 14 to 17 February this year. The team was in Uganda to investigate allegations against Uganda — allegations of its collaboration with UNITA in contravention of United Nations sanctions. The members of the Panel met Ugandan Government officials on Wednesday, 16 February, and they were led by Ambassador Anders Möllander.

The Panel raised a number of questions, made allegations and sought answers from the Government of Uganda. The Government of Uganda categorized those questions under several headings, which appear in the annex to document S/2000/200.

The first category was alleged arms transfers by the Government of Uganda to UNITA. The Panel sought to know whether it was true that some of the military tanks imported by Uganda through the port of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania in 1998 and early 1999 were destined for UNITA-held areas.

The Panel of Experts sought to know whether it was true that there was a relationship between UNITA and the Uganda-backed rebel movement of Jean-Pierre Bemba, which is fighting the Government of Kabila in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Panel wanted to know whether Uganda was a conduit for arms to the rebel movement, in circumvention of the arms embargo.

The Panel wanted to find out from the Ugandan Government who issued end-user certificates for arms re-exported from Uganda.

The Panel of Experts wanted to establish the truth regarding Ugandan customs procedures, and whether it was possible to import and re-export UNITA diamonds

into and out of Uganda, and to re-export petroleum products to UNITA-held areas in Angola.

The Panel sought to obtain information about air supply and cargo aircraft operating out of Uganda. It asked why an alleged high-level Government official took an interest in the release of a cargo plane which had been impounded in Zambia in August 1999, after having discharged its cargo, on suspicion that it had been ferrying arms to UNITA-held areas. It was alleged that someone in the Government of Uganda asked President Chiluba of Zambia to intervene in order to have the plane released.

The Panel wanted to verify reports of visits by senior Ugandan army officers to UNITA-held areas of Angola between 1996 and December 1999. The Panel also wanted to establish whether there was a visit to Uganda by Jonas Savimbi of UNITA in October and November 1999, as well as visits by other senior UNITA officials.

The Panel asked the Ugandan Government to tell the truth as to whether Uganda had any information about Victor Bout or Boutov, an arms dealer operating a cargo airliner under different names; Jacques "Kiki" Lamaire, who owns planes and is involved in fuel airlifts to UNITA; and many others.

The Government of Uganda responded to those questions as follows. With regard to arms transfers to UNITA, as far as end-user certificates for large consignments of arms are concerned, these are issued only by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence. The office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence, confirmed to the Panel of Experts that no such certificate has ever been issued for arms to Angola.

As for the alleged importation of tanks through the port of Dar es Salaam in 1998 and 1999 which were allegedly sent to UNITA, the Government of Uganda informed the Panel of Experts that all the tanks which had been imported through the port of Dar es Salaam were still in the possession of the Ugandan armed forces, and it asked the experts to verify physically those facts.

The Government of Uganda informed the experts — and I would like to inform you, Mr. President, and this Council — that Uganda does not supply, and has never supplied arms to UNITA, either directly or indirectly, through the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC). It is a well-known fact that most of the arms which are used by the rebel group in the Democratic Republic of the Congo were captured from the Government

forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and from the allies of Kabila who were defeated, namely, the forces from Chad.

I would like to inform this Council that, while the Government of Uganda is cooperating with the MLC of Jean-Pierre Bemba, it is not the policy of the Government of Uganda to dictate whom our partners cooperate with. Therefore, the Government of Uganda cannot be responsible for the arms which the rebel groups have in their possession.

On customs procedures, I would like to inform the Council, as the Government informed the Panel of Experts, that Uganda does not have a seaport. Most of the imports — indeed, 70 per cent of them — come in by road. With regard to transit cargo, the customs department of the Uganda Revenue Authority receives and escorts transit cargo vehicles from entry to exit points. In most cases, the original seals on the containers are left intact. Should there be any cause of suspicion, Customs does the physical verification of the goods, after which a Uganda Revenue Authority seal is put on the container. In all cases of transit goods, a customs bond is executed at the point of entry and the same sum is refunded at the end.

Total verification is done at an inland container depot for goods destined for Uganda. The Government informed the Panel of Experts that records showed clearly that Uganda had neither imported nor re-exported diamonds into or out of Uganda. Uganda, as you know, does not produce petroleum products; neither does it re-export those products, either by land or by sea.

With regard to the cargo aircraft which took off from Entebbe, the Panel was informed that Uganda has only one international airport, at Entebbe, with three runways. The other airfields are either grass or murrum and only take light aircraft.

The Government of Uganda is a signatory to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation; Uganda is, therefore, duty bound not to allow into her airspace aircraft violating the airspace of other sovereign States. The air base at Entebbe is open to and is used by many leased aircraft, but it is impossible to conduct secret flights from there without attracting the attention of the Government.

The report specifically mentions a plane which was impounded in Zambia and which was allegedly operating

out of Entebbe. I would like to inform you, Mr. President, that that plane was impounded in Lusaka, Zambia after it had left Entebbe for the last time, one month, in July, prior to its impounding. It left Entebbe allegedly en route to Eldoret, in Kenya. If it diverted itself to Lusaka, the Ugandan Government was not responsible for that. There are no records to indicate that the plane returned to Entebbe after it had been banned, although the operator made several attempts to have it returned.

The Government of Uganda takes serious exception to the allegation that a very high-ranking member of the Government contacted President Chiluba over the release of the plane, and we strongly object to the insinuation that that high Ugandan official who contacted President Chiluba could only have been President Chiluba's counterpart. We challenge the Panel of Experts to produce evidence for that insinuation.

With regard to visits by UNITA officials to Uganda and vice versa, I would like to inform the Council that Mr. Savimbi never visited Uganda on those said dates. No UNITA official has ever visited Uganda since the imposition of the travel ban. No Ugandan Government official has visited UNITA-held areas in Angola. The names of people forwarded by the Panel did not appear anywhere in the records of Uganda.

On other matters that the Panel raised — that UNITA assisted the Uganda armed forces and installed an anti-aircraft battery in Kisangani — the Panel was informed, and I repeat, that the Uganda Government found it ridiculous that the Panel could conclude that the Uganda Government would depend on a fledgling rebel army for its air defence.

On alleged military cooperation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: the Uganda armed forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are not holding any territory which borders UNITA-held areas and, therefore, the allegation that the two armed forces are collaborating is unfounded.

Before I conclude, let me state that the Panel was informed that Angolan intelligence officers had visited Uganda in the framework of cooperation between the two Governments and had the opportunity to travel to different parts of the country in which they had interest but had not turned up any evidence incriminating Uganda. The Government of Uganda would accept and welcome any follow-up visit, from Angola or from the investigators of

this Panel should they wish to do so, in order to erase the suspicion of alleged collaboration of Uganda and UNITA.

We state Uganda's support for the Angola Peace Agreement and respect for and adherence to all Security Council resolutions. The Panel was informed that Uganda would submit its findings to the Chairman of the Security Council Committee on Angola, who would in turn make a report to the Security Council. The Government of Uganda takes this opportunity to reiterate its offer to the Angolans to come to Uganda, if they so wish, and cross check the information given over the period and on the allegations made in this report.

In conclusion, Uganda is committed to peace and security in Africa. Uganda has no collaboration whatsoever with UNITA. Uganda has never, and will never, support any measure which breaks the sanctions of the United Nations Security Council.

The President: I shall now give the floor to Ambassador Fowler, Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning the situation in Angola, to respond to some of the comments and questions raised.

Mr. Fowler: I join virtually every other speaker in expressing my thanks to you, Mr. President, and to our colleagues in the Council for agreeing to give the representatives of countries accused of sanctions busting a chance to state their case. I think it is important that we did so, and I am glad they had that opportunity.

I reject, of course, any suggestion that my country — very, very recently a diamond producer — is somehow biased in its administration of Security Council sanctions. Further, I can assure you, Mr. President, that no Canadian participated in the leaking, cunning or otherwise, of any documents to the press relating to the Panel's report. Indeed, I personally deeply regret that such leaks occurred, and I apologize for any embarrassments such leaks caused, particularly in view of their significant inaccuracies.

With regard to strident statements suggesting the Panel used something less than adequate rules of evidence, I would note that the Panel used a higher standard — more than one witness deemed credible by the Panel, with direct personal knowledge of specific violations — than would apply in a court of law in most countries in, say, a bribery case.

The 15 hours of interviews with captured or defected UNITA officers in Luanda in early January were of course recorded four and a half months after the Panel began its investigations, and therefore were used to corroborate, confirm or eliminate a huge volume of evidence already received by the members of the Panel in their extensive travels.

I appreciate that this is not a typical meeting of the Council, nor is it easy for any country to suffer such accusations. That said, some useful information was offered this afternoon — particularly by Morocco and Belarus — and I am grateful for it. After all, this is what we are about; we are in the business of improving our database and our information exchange, and this meeting has been useful for that purpose.

The development of such information, and the provision of such recommendations as we have received from the Panel this morning, is of course precisely what we asked the Panel of Experts to do. As I said this morning, I believe that they have done us proud, and under extremely difficult circumstances. I ought to have added — and I am pleased to do so now — that the Panel did so without fear or favour, and I think that is clear from its report.

Faced with convincing evidence of high-level complicity, I stress that the Panel had no option but to report it. Sanctions have been grievously flouted by individuals, Governments and business enterprises in the matter of arms and war *matériel* for nearly seven years. Until very recently, the will of the Council with regard to the never-ending civil war in Angola had had absolutely no impact in terms of limiting the horror being visited upon the people of Angola. Clearly, the Council hopes to change that, and the Panel has offered a blueprint for change.

No change is possible, however, without radical changes in the way we all do our business and in the standards of compliance we require of all Member States. For there is a massive body of evidence that the sanctions have been consistently and grossly violated, and nobody has agreed with that. How else has Savimbi managed to carry on this war in the way that he has? Every Member of this Organization knows that these sanctions are being violated, and it cannot really be a surprise to learn how it is being done. We look forward to cooperating closely with all Members of the Organization, including those who took the floor this afternoon, as we develop new standards of sanctions discipline to deprive UNITA of its military option.

Before I conclude, I would just like to say a word to my colleague, Ambassador Doutriaux, further to his intervention this morning. He asked lots of questions that I think would take a lot longer than six months to answer, but they are valid questions, and he has every right to ask them. Certainly we need to know more and, as the Panel has recommended, I hope very much we will put in place a continuing mechanism to get the sorts of answers he has requested and, indeed, to be able to ask more questions. Of course, that is why I put before the Council a very specific recommendation of the Panel to set up a continuing mechanism that will allow the provision of more answers and the asking of more questions in an interactive process.

Ambassador Doutriaux himself allowed that he was aware that certain sources of information cannot be revealed, but others can and will be. As to his specific queries about the provenance of specific statements and the timeliness and the charges made by the Panel, if I could ask him to make his questions a little bit more precise I will ask the Panel to give what answers they can to his specific questions, bearing in mind that the Panel is on overtime and that they are not being paid. They are here because they decided to join us, and maybe we had better not impose on them until we have decided what we are going to do in the future and whether we are going to somehow make it possible for them, or their successors, to continue working for this particular public good.

I wish to assure Ambassador Doutriaux that the Panel was well aware of the specific moments at which specific sanctions came into effect. There is no doubt that the Panel knew that arms sanctions had been in effect since 1993 and that travel and diplomatic sanctions had been in force since 1997, and diamond sanctions since 1998, and those timing realities were very carefully reflected in their findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The delegation of France has asked whether countries and Governments more specifically accused of sanctions busting were consulted in advance. I think the Ambassador of Tunisia asked somewhat the same question. The short answer is that they were, both by the Panel — which in a couple of instances was treated rather shabbily when it visited certain countries and tried to engage in an effective dialogue — but also by me in the days that preceded the release of the Panel's report. I wish to qualify that by noting that I did not provide representatives of countries that were subsequently accused of sanctions busting in the report with precise

details or conclusions of the Panel's report, which of course I did not and could not have known until two weeks ago. I did meet with those concerned, however, to give them a very general but nevertheless clear idea of the extent of the findings that I anticipated would be reached by the Panel.

In conclusion, as Chairman of the Committee charged with enforcing these measures, I hope that the Governments that for different reasons have not cooperated or responded specifically to specific Panel requests until now might soon do so. If they address any such information to me as Chairman of the Committee rather than to the Panel, which is now defunct, I will ensure that the information is brought to the attention of the Committee and therefore informs our further work in this area.

I thank you, Mr. President, for this detailed day of investigation into why sanctions against UNITA have not

worked better and on how we can make them work better in the future.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

In prior consultations, the Council decided to convene another open meeting to give an opportunity to the larger membership of the United Nations to participate in this issue. I will keep myself open to that on the understanding that if there are needs expressed and requests by the Member States to speak, then maybe we will schedule such a meeting.

In any case, the Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.



Security Council

Fifty-fifth Year

*Provisional***4114**th Meeting

Tuesday, 21 March 2000, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in East Timor.



The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

Expression of welcome to the new Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations

The President: I should like, at the outset of the meeting, to extend, on behalf of the Council, a warm welcome to the new Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Mr. Jean-David Levitte. We look forward to cooperating with him in the Council's work and to his contribution to our work.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in East Timor

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Indonesia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Thayeb (Indonesia) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. I give him the floor.

Mr. Annabi: This briefing will cover the period since the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, briefed the Council on 3 February. I will cover, successively, the economic and social situation, the maintenance of law and order and the security situation, as well as the situation of refugees in West Timor.

Since Mr. Vieira de Mello's briefing on 3 February, there have been important developments, including the signing, on 21 February, of an agreement between the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the World Bank concerning a large community empowerment project. Other developments have been, of course, the formal hand-over of responsibility from the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) to the military component of UNTAET on 23 February and the visit by President Wahid of Indonesia on 29 February. The Secretary-General has already briefed the Council, on 29 February, on his own visit to East Timor in the middle of February. There have been other high-level visitors to East Timor, including the President of Portugal and the Prime Minister of Ireland.

Economic and social conditions in East Timor remain the main and primary concern. Very high unemployment and high prices continue to pose a threat to social peace. The situation is reflected in the very large number of applicants who respond to UNTAET's recruitment efforts.

A number of efforts are under way to create employment opportunities. These efforts include 18 quick-impact projects undertaken by UNTAET for the repair of local infrastructure in advance of the World Bank's much larger community empowerment project, under which the communities will manage their own rehabilitation projects. Additional projects are being undertaken by bilateral donors. At the end of February, UNTAET was providing stipends or salaries to more than 2,500 civil servants, a number that will grow quickly as a result of the recruitment of new personnel. A fast-track programme in education has also grown rapidly and now involves some 7,000 teachers, reaching over 130,000 schoolchildren.

At present, cash contributions to the UNTAET Trust Fund amount to a little over \$23 million, out of an estimated total of \$43 million that will be needed for the East Timorese administration during the year 2000.

The community empowerment project is of particular interest. While it deals essentially with the rehabilitation of infrastructure and support for income-generating activities, it provides at the same time for the strengthening of the capacity of subdistricts and villages, through elected representatives, to determine their priorities and to manage the implementation of the projects they decide on.

During the very important visit of President Wahid of Indonesia to East Timor, it was agreed that the Government of Indonesia would work together with UNTAET to facilitate the rebuilding of public records and archives, the return of cultural artifacts and the reopening of cross-border trade. President Wahid also agreed to the establishment of a land corridor linking the Oecussi enclave to the main part of East Timor. On 4 March, the Indonesian air carrier Merpati resumed commercial flights between Indonesia and East Timor. An Australian regional airline has also been operating flights between Dili and Darwin since the beginning of the year. President Wahid also confirmed his Government's agreement to the establishment by UNTAET of a liaison office in Kupang, West Timor — an office which actually opened today.

Since the Secretary-General's report to the Council at the end of January, UNTAET has passed legislation approved by the National Consultative Council on a number of important matters. Customs and immigration arrangements have been put in place and a border service established to administer those arrangements. A provisional tax regime has been established, with taxes and duties levied on imports, exports and the domestic production of goods. Collection of import duties commenced yesterday, 20 March. Regulations on the licensing and supervision of banks, on public procurement and on the organization of the courts have also been issued.

Turning to the law and order situation, the number of major incidents inside East Timor has recently declined. Law enforcement, however, is still weak, and Timorese communities and groups have in some cases attempted to enforce law and order directly. UNTAET has cooperated with some of these groups informally, so long as they act within the law; however, I must report that there have been some abuses. UNTAET's civilian police is still building up its strength; as of today, it has a strength of 933, which will grow to close to 1,000 by the end of this week, out of

an authorized strength of 1,640. Yesterday, the first 50 Timorese were recruited to the newly established Police Assistance Group. The creation of the Police Assistance Group is an interim measure pending the development of an indigenous police force. The Group comprises former local police personnel, who will assist the United Nations police but who will have no executive powers, which will continue to be exercised by UNTAET. As for the new East Timor police, I am happy to report that the first group of recruits will begin a four-month training course next Monday, on 27 March.

UNTAET has issued a regulation establishing a panel of Timorese and foreign judges to try war crimes and crimes against humanity. Close to 300 murder cases, involving 627 victims, are currently under investigation. Most of these relate to the period between late April and September last year. UNTAET is currently negotiating with the Indonesian Government an agreement on cooperation in such cases, including the exchange of evidence and access to witnesses.

Turning to the security situation, the handover from INTERFET to UNTAET's military component at the end of February went very smoothly. However, within a week of the handover the military component of UNTAET was tested, as had in fact been widely expected. The test came through increased incursions of pro-autonomy militia members from West Timor. In one such incident, on 5 March, a villager was killed and another was wounded. UNTAET troops searched the area and on the following day, 6 March, found a group of five armed men in a house. Four of them managed to escape after an exchange of fire; one was captured and interrogated. There have also been a number of cases in which weapons were found on refugees returning from West Timor. UNTAET has therefore instituted stricter controls in that regard.

UNTAET has reported that, according to information available to it, elements of the Indonesian armed forces continued to tolerate and even support the militias in West Timor. On 9 and 10 March, the Force Commander of UNTAET together with the Political Director of the mission visited Jakarta to discuss these incursions from West Timor with the Indonesian authorities. They received firm assurances that stern action would be taken against militia activity, including as regards military training in and outside the refugee settlements in West Timor.

As of yesterday, a total of 7,310 United Nations troops were deployed in East Timor. The remaining troops are scheduled to arrive by the end of this month, which will bring the total strength of the military component of UNTAET to 8,600. In addition, UNTAET's military component includes 200 military observers, 198 of whom are now present in the territory.

Turning to the refugee situation, a little more than 153,000 refugees have by now returned to East Timor, most of them returning from West Timor. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that approximately 50,000 more would wish to return. The total remaining refugee population in West Timor is currently estimated at approximately 100,000 people. The Government of Indonesia and the High Commissioner for Refugees are conducting a census to obtain a more exact number. Primary and secondary movements of returnees are managed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) from the refugee camps through points of entry to final destination in East Timor. While there have been incidents of violence against returnees, for the most part the return has been effected with minimal incident, and the reintegration of refugees into their original communities has been generally smooth.

It is worth noting that persons who supported autonomy have also been among those who returned. Under arrangements made by UNTAET, Mr. Joanico Belo, a senior militia leader, visited Baucau and Los Palos from 9 to 12 March to see for himself the conditions awaiting returning refugees. He was well received wherever he went and held meetings with local leaders, who assured him that refugees returning to these areas would be safe, while those accused of crimes would be dealt with in accordance with fair and transparent procedures.

In a similar development, six former Timorese members of the Indonesian armed forces visited Aileu last weekend to discuss the return of 59 former soldiers and their families. They received assurances from the local leaders that they were welcome, so long as they were returning not as soldiers but as East Timorese willing to participate and assist in the reconstruction of the country.

The High Commissioner for Refugees, supported by UNTAET, has asked Indonesia to adopt a comprehensive strategy and to allow the refugees to decide whether to return to East Timor or to be resettled in Indonesia. To encourage returns, UNTAET has suggested that Indonesia should publicly commit itself to paying the pensions and benefits accrued by those East Timorese who had worked

for the Indonesian civil service, even if they return to East Timor.

Mr. Vieira de Mello is scheduled to visit Jakarta again next week to follow up on some of these issues with the authorities in Jakarta, including of course regarding the security situation at the border with West Timor.

UNTAET has been giving thought to what would be the most appropriate sequence of steps as East Timor moves towards independence. Rather than trying to establish a fixed timetable, Mr. Vieira de Mello is focusing, as requested by the Secretary-General, on objective benchmarks that will have to be achieved in this process leading towards independence. This is of course a complex and politically sensitive undertaking, which will involve close consultation with the East Timorese. Mr. Vieira de Mello has reported that this consultative process has in fact begun in an informal manner. We will of course keep the Security Council informed as this process unfolds.

The President: I thank Mr. Annabi for his useful briefing, and now I will give the floor to the members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): I warmly thank Mr. Annabi for the update he has provided us this morning. I think we will all want to pay tribute to what Special Representative Vieira de Mello has achieved so far in East Timor and to commend the whole team of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) for what they are achieving there.

I think it is a sign of our confidence in that team and that leadership that we assume that, in spite of the difficulties in East Timor, things are going steadily and inexorably in the right direction towards a stable independence. But the briefing we have had this morning and news we have had over the last couple of weeks, I think, remind us that there are still some problems, some quite serious problems in East Timor. I just want to cover briefly three of them.

The first is the increasing criminality in East Timor. We are all aware of it. It stems from an anarchical situation in the recent past. The United Kingdom hopes that the deployment of the rapid-reaction unit will help with that particular difficulty. We pay tribute to Portugal for leading on this front, and we welcome the stricter controls in the whole area of police activity that

Mr. Annabi spoke about this morning. We also welcome the opening of the East Timorese police training school and the establishment of the Police Assistance Group, which are both steps in the right direction. We hope that these moves will help UNTAET bring unofficial security groups, as they are called, under its control.

But my second point, I think, is even more serious. This is the continued reports of militia activity in East Timor. The recent outbreaks of violence actually sound like the worst we have had since the deployment of the International Force in East Timor last autumn. There have been press reports — perhaps assumptions, maybe evidence — that the Indonesian armed forces (TNI) have been to some extent involved in these outbreaks of violence. The Assistant Secretary-General said to us this morning that it seems that elements of the TNI continue to tolerate or even support militia activity in East Timor.

It is very good to hear that UNTAET has pressed this issue vigorously in Jakarta. The Indonesian Government are clearly aware of some of what is going on. They have made it clear that they do not support and will not countenance continued or residual complicity between the TNI and the militia, but we must make sure that they follow up on their promises.

I think the Council this morning should make it clear that we find continued militia activity and any residual complicity with it on the part of the TNI completely unacceptable. UNTAET must be allowed to do its job and bring this province through to independence without the unwelcome attentions of those in West Timor who still feel that they can affect the situation, or who indeed oppose the Jakarta Government's interest in creating stability in East Timor.

My third point is about the disbursement of funds. We are a little concerned at the slow rate of disbursements from the United Nations trust fund. In stark contrast with this is the availability of funds from assessed contributions for the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor. We would be grateful if the Secretariat could shed some light on the reasons for this delay in disbursements from the United Nations trust fund.

Ms. Soderberg (United States of America): I want to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his very sobering briefing. It is a reminder to all of us that even though East Timor is not on the front pages, as it was last summer, I think it continues to be a very difficult mission, and I think Mr. Annabi's briefing underscores the need to

remind ourselves of the difficult job we have given the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and of the need to commend the members of UNTAET, and in particular Special Representative Vieira de Mello for his leadership and his determination to ensure that UNTAET is successful. It is obviously a very difficult situation and needs the continued involvement of this body and the Security Council. So I commend the President for holding this open meeting. I think it is important to shine light repeatedly and openly on the problems that are occurring in East Timor and to continually discuss how we as the body that has given UNTAET the job that it is struggling to do can assist UNTAET in this effort.

We are certainly deeply disturbed by the reports that we have heard this morning, as well as others, of the Indonesian military's continued support for the militias operating in West Timor refugee camps and along the East-West border. I think we have to realize that the Indonesian military as an institution has done little to address the recent militia attacks against United Nations personnel and East Timorese civilians. We understand that there is evidence that elements of the Indonesian armed forces (TNI) may be supplying arms and equipment to the militias as well.

I think this is obviously of deep concern to Council members. It is obviously unacceptable. It should be strongly condemned. I think that it would be useful for the Council to address this particular issue in another session in the very near future and see what steps we could take to try to address this very serious situation.

We, the United States, and, obviously, other members of the Council have repeatedly urged the Indonesian Government to disarm and disband the militia groups. We have been given assurances that these steps would be taken; yet we have yet to see decisive action. We are deeply disturbed by the increase in militia attacks against United Nations peacekeepers.

We call on the Indonesian Government to fulfil its responsibility and put an end to all militia activity along the East Timor border. In order to resolve the refugee problem once and for all and to put a stop to incursions across the border, Indonesia must disarm and disband the hard-core militias and move them, especially their leaders, away from Timor. The Government must also reassign remaining East Timorese members of the TNI to other parts of Indonesia and end any TNI collaboration with the militias.

These are not new ideas. Ambassador Holbrooke made these very points upon returning from Indonesia in November of last year and repeated them during the 3 February briefing to the Council by the Special Representative, Mr. Vieira de Mello. More than enough time has elapsed for the Council to see concrete action.

There is some positive news. We welcome the recent rise in return numbers. But we also urge Indonesia to meet its stated deadlines for ending support to the East Timorese refugees currently in West Timor and for closing the camps by the end of June.

The United States has done its part in trying to help East Timor. We have provided contributions for a wide range of needs, including humanitarian needs and the needs of displaced persons. This has been our first priority. We spent over \$20 million in 1999 on relevant humanitarian assistance. This year, we expect an additional \$49 million in multilateral and bilateral humanitarian assistance, including aid to East Timorese refugees still in the camps in East Timor. I think we all need to heed the calls we heard this morning to provide adequately for refugees, and I would encourage all Member States to do their fair share, as well.

The United States is supporting the multilateral effort in East Timor, with contributions to the UNTAET Trust Fund and to the World Bank reconstruction trust fund totalling \$4.5 million. We believe that the UNTAET Trust Fund is vital to ensuring that basic public services are fully restored in East Timor and that the East Timorese develop the skills to provide those services on a continuing basis. We also believe that the World Bank, with its trust fund and its coordinating role, will play a vital part in building East Timor's long-term, self-sustaining economy.

The United States will also spend about \$20 million this fiscal year in expanding United States Agency for International Development projects in East Timor. These include coffee-growing projects and a variety of quick-impact projects that we believe will help generate significant employment opportunities. These and other programmes will help address East Timor's urgent needs for forensic human rights training, private sector projects and those programmes that will focus on civil society and the institutions critical to democratic government.

As we heard today, internal security is another immediate priority in East Timor, and the United States will increase its civil contingent in support of UNTAET

and, consistent with our laws and regulations, help establish local police capabilities.

In closing, I would note that the UNTAET Trust Fund currently has only a small portion of the money pledged to it in Tokyo and that donor pledges are only slowly being converted into real assistance to address East Timor's burning needs. We would certainly echo the call of the Secretary-General upon his return from East Timor in urging donors to get aid into East Timor quickly. The United Nations has put an enormous amount of resources into trying to help the people of East Timor, and unless we give the international community the resources to complete that job and provide the resources to the people of East Timor, we will not be able to meet the expectations that we in this body have created.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I should like to say, Sir, how deeply touched I was by your words of welcome. I sincerely thank you. It is a pleasure for me to join the United Nations family again, for the third time in my career, and it is an honour for me to sit beside ambassadors who, on a daily basis, contribute their wisdom and experience to this Organization. Like my outstanding predecessor and friend, Alain Dejammet, I shall listen to everyone, pay attention to the concerns of all and remain ready to enter into discussion and dialogue.

It is good that our Council is again addressing the question of the situation in East Timor. This is a particularly difficult situation, but for the United Nations it is a mission that could become a model. We have read the report of the Secretary-General and listened attentively to the information provided by Mr. Hédi Annabi, whom I should like to thank. In the spirit of this interactive briefing, I should like, with your permission, Sir, to ask him a few questions relating to three issues.

The first point that concerns us is the situation with regard to the return of refugees from West Timor. If I understood Mr. Annabi correctly, there are still about 100,000 of them, and the problem therefore remains one of the major concerns of our Council. The Indonesian authorities and the army high command have affirmed their willingness to work to put an end to the activities of the pro-integrationist militias. But are the Indonesian authorities really in a position to implement those commitments on the ground and strictly to monitor the local echelons of the militia hierarchy? Here, I should like to associate myself with the comments of previous speakers; we are deeply concerned about what has been

said in this regard. Has the rate of return increased in recent weeks? Furthermore, we have heard that former members of the pro-integrationist militias now seem to be returning to East Timor. If that is the case, how are they being welcomed, what treatment are they receiving from the local population and what role is the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) playing in this regard?

My second question relates to the National Consultative Council. Of course, France welcomes the fact that it was set up on 2 December; it will make it possible for all Timorese to express their views. Has a preliminary assessment been made of the activities of the National Consultative Council? Does it meet on a regular basis? Is it dealing effectively with all important issues? Has the Forum for Unity, Democracy and Justice, the only pro-autonomy group that had not joined the Council by the end of January, done so yet?

Finally, I would like to ask a more future-oriented question. UNTAET is, of course, doing excellent work and enjoys our total and unqualified support. I would like in particular to pay tribute to the outstanding work being carried out by Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello. But East Timor must, of course, have a future beyond the United Nations presence. In that context, are there any expectations that local resources will expand? We noted with much interest that just yesterday the first tax was levied in East Timor, in the form of a 5 per cent customs duty. We would be interested to hear Mr. Annabi's views on the long-term prospects for East Timor.

Mr. Fowler (Canada): Let me begin, Mr. President, by associating myself with your warm welcome to Ambassador Levitte. I certainly look forward very much to working closely with him over the months ahead. It is a pleasure to hear him remember his predecessor with such kind words. I know we share those sentiments. Mr. Levitte's reputation precedes him to this body. I know he will bring an enormous accumulation of wisdom and experience to our deliberations.

Let me also join Ambassador Greenstock in extending warm congratulations, through Mr. Annabi, to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and, in particular, to Sergio Vieira de Mello, for what we Canadians consider to be the very significant successes that they have achieved. Through him, we thank the UNTAET staff for the high level of professionalism with which they have prosecuted the difficult mandate that we assigned them.

We welcome the signature of a joint communiqué between UNTAET and the Indonesian authorities at the end of February — one which agreed to the free passage of goods and people between East Timor and Indonesia, and which allowed the unimpeded access between East Timor and the Oecussi enclave in West Timor.

Canada remains concerned over the continuing incidence of border skirmishes involving militias operating out of West Timor and the personnel of UNTAET. UNTAET troops came under fire three times on 1 and 2 March in the border areas in south-west East Timor — and of course Mr. Annabi referred this morning to other incidents of exchanges of fire, which are clearly unsettling. Civilians have been targeted, as he mentioned. Such acts clearly undermine President Wahid's welcome policy of reconciliation. We are encouraged by reports that the Indonesian Government will indeed redouble its efforts, as is clearly necessary, to bring such acts of violence to an end.

We are also encouraged by the Indonesian decision to sign a memorandum of understanding with UNTAET on cooperation in legal, judicial and human rights matters, including the investigation of human rights abuses. This accords, of course, with the Secretary-General's call for cooperation between Indonesia and UNTAET in carrying out further investigations of such abuses.

The recent report of the Indonesian Human Rights Commission on violations in East Timor was a courageous first step in bringing to account those responsible for atrocities in East Timor. This issue is central to progress towards reconciliation between Indonesia and East Timor, and to the process of peace-building. In this context, Indonesia's announced intention to prosecute those responsible for atrocities in East Timor is welcome, as is UNTAET's decision to investigate allegations and establish an East Timorese court system to try offenders.

We are encouraged to see that refugees continue to register to return to East Timor. Some 1,500 returned during the week of 6 March alone. The return process is accelerating despite the ongoing campaign of militia harassment and misinformation in the camps in West Timor and the frailty of essential services and infrastructure in returnee communities. As the 31 March deadline set by Indonesia for refugees to decide whether to return to East Timor or relocate within Indonesia approaches, we would be very interested if Mr. Annabi

could indicate what degree of confidence we have that the bulk of those willing to return will have done so by that date and whether, in his view, there is some flexibility with respect to that deadline — that is, do we believe that after the deadline at the end of this month, refugees will still be free to return.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We too would like to associate ourselves with the words of welcome addressed to Ambassador Jean-David Levitte. We know him as one of the most prominent and talented diplomats of France and as a well-known jurist and orientalist. We are convinced that Ambassador Levitte, like his predecessor, Ambassador Dejammet, will make an extremely important contribution to the work of the Security Council.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his briefing. We believe that the information given in the briefing on the current situation in East Timor provides sufficient grounds for an optimistic evaluation of the situation, despite certain contradictions. Of course, only the first stage has been accomplished in the difficult matter of establishing independence in the territory, creating democratic institutions and stabilizing the political and economic situation, although it was an extremely important stage.

However, one can say even now that the positive trends that characterize today's situation in East Timor — primarily in the area of security — are definitely gaining ground. To a significant extent that has been possible thanks to the forthright efforts of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), under the able guidance of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello. At the same time, like other members of the Security Council who have spoken before us, we cannot fail to be concerned over reports of a resurgence in the activities of the pro-integration militia, which is trying to impede the return of refugees to East Timor.

In general, from our standpoint, the speedy and effective resolution of the problem of refugees and the facilitation of their safe return will, to a large extent, determine the successful handling of tasks in the area of the rehabilitation and development of East Timor. Other conditions are just as important for the further normalization of the situation in East Timor — namely, the revival of a functioning economy and the establishment of effective governance. We, like our colleagues in the Security Council, are convinced that the Council must

continue to carefully and regularly follow developments in the situation in East Timor.

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first of all like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for the complete and useful information he has given us.

I would also like to thank the delegation of Bangladesh for its excellent initiative to hold an open briefing on the question of East Timor. My delegation has always said that it is necessary for there to be greater transparency in the work of the Council through the holding of meetings in which non-members of the Council can participate.

There can be no doubt that the United Nations has carried out a task of great magnitude during these first months of the territory's transitional period towards independence. Up to now, it has been possible to make progress in the setting up of civil administration and judicial structures, and the tremendous work to rebuild the infrastructure and educational and health system of the territory has commenced. It is very positive that the entire effort has been carried out in close consultation and cooperation with the Timorese people, as represented in the National Consultative Council.

We would like to congratulate in particular the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Vieira de Mello, for his efforts and for the successes he has had to date.

Nevertheless, we cannot fail to mention our concern about two issues that, despite the passage of time, have not yet been satisfactorily resolved. The first of those concerns has to do with the problem of refugees, especially in West Timor. The second has to do with the illegal activities being carried out on the land border of East Timor.

As far as refugees are concerned, although tremendous efforts have been made in order to allow the return of over 153,000 persons to East Timor, there are still at least 50,000 other Timorese who are prepared to return. The other aspect of this problem involves individuals who wish to remain in Indonesia and who have to be reintegrated economically and socially into that country. We think that the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the specialized agencies should give the highest

priority to resolving these issues in close cooperation with the Indonesian authorities.

With regard to border incidents, we cannot fail to express our concern about increased tension along the land border of East Timor as a result of the actions of some militia elements. In this regard, we would like to express our support for UNTAET's response, which enhanced security in those regions and responded energetically to the attacks. We believe that response shows militia members that the United Nations stands ready to preserve the integrity and stability of East Timor and the lives of all Timorese by using all the means provided for in Security Council resolution 1272 (1999).

I should like to reiterate once again the need for those militias to be completely unarmed and for increased monitoring of the border areas.

Finally, we would like to express our satisfaction at the visit of President Wahid of Indonesia to East Timor. I believe that the exchange of bilateral visits will foster genuine reconciliation between the peoples and the authorities of both countries and make it possible to resolve the refugee problem as well as problems related to the borders between East and West Timor.

The Indonesian military authorities have proposed that General de los Santos set up joint monitoring posts along the borders. In this respect, I should like to hear what UNTAET's reaction has been to that proposal and what additional measures are being considered to put an end to the border incidents.

Mr. Hamer (Netherlands): I would like at the outset to thank Mr. Annabi for his very comprehensive briefing on the situation in East Timor. While the problems remain enormous, we welcome the positive development and join those who have paid tribute to Mr. Vieira de Mello for his contribution to that end.

The visit of President Wahid to East Timor on 29 February was an important step towards normalization of the relations between Jakarta and Dili. Not only did the President's visit send an important political signal, it led also to concrete results such as the establishment of an Indonesian consulate and the opening of the air route to Kupang, as well as to measures to activate cross-border trade.

At the same time, major worries remain. The situation of the internally displaced persons in West Timor remains

critical, and their safe and voluntary return is still insufficiently guaranteed. Intimidation and disinformation by militia members are still occurring. Under these circumstances, it is uncertain whether refugees will truly be in a position to decide, before the 10 April deadline, on whether and when to return to East Timor. It is clear that the Indonesian authorities' responsibility for their continued well-being and rights will not end as of that date.

But in East Timor itself there are serious security concerns as well. In the absence of a legal system, there are reports of vigilante justice spreading. Particularly serious is the increasing number of border incidents. We expect from the Government of Indonesia more determined efforts to bring the militias operating from West Timor, often with the connivance of the Indonesian armed forces (TNI), under its control.

With respect to the general issue of security, I was wondering if Mr. Annabi could tell us what has become of FALINTIL and what the current thinking is regarding the need, or the absence of the need, for future armed forces in East Timor.

In his briefing on 29 February, the Secretary-General stressed the need for greater momentum in the reconstruction efforts by the international community to avoid dependency and social unrest. In a situation where all institutions need building or rebuilding, it will not be easy to instil in the East Timorese a sense of ownership. We hope that the community empowerment projects being developed by the World Bank and others will succeed in including the East Timorese and convincing them that the ownership is theirs.

On this point, I have some further questions of Mr. Annabi. I was wondering if Mr. Annabi could tell us more about efforts to attract members of the East Timor diaspora to lend their skills and support to the reconstruction of their country, as referred to by the Secretary-General. What can be done to develop a private sector, alongside the setting up of a civil service to which Mr. Annabi referred? I would also be interested to know if Mr. Annabi can tell us a little more about the interlocutors of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and about the leadership that East Timor must develop to guide it through the enormous challenges on its path.

Finally, we are encouraged by the agreement between UNTAET and the Indonesian authorities on the

exchange of information for the purposes of criminal investigation. The investigation into the murder of Dutch journalist Sander Thoenes has shown just how important such international cooperation is, in particular in the area of human rights abuses.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his briefing.

There have been some recent positive developments in East Timor. The transition from the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has been smooth. At the end of last month, President Wahid paid a visit to East Timor. Progress has been made in the relations between East Timor and Indonesia as well as other countries of the region. It should be noted that the situation in East Timor as a whole remains stable and that reconstruction, in all its varied aspects, has begun.

We would like also to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Vieira de Mello, and to all of the staff of UNTAET for their effective work.

Difficulties persist with respect to reconstruction and to the maintenance of the current stable situation. Problems include sabotage activities, the resettlement of returning refugees, the rehabilitation of the infrastructure, the restoration of the rule of law and the lack of resources.

It is our hope that all of the parties in East Timor will maintain a spirit of cooperation and reconciliation so as to build on the good start they have made with respect to preserving stability in East Timor. We hope that, with the support and the assistance of the international community, the people of East Timor will be able to overcome their difficulties and reconstruct their homeland. It is also our hope that all of the parties in East Timor will enhance their close cooperation with the United Nations so as to ensure the success of the United Nations peacekeeping operations there.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): Mr. President, I would also like to associate myself fully with the warm words of welcome you extended to the representative of France to the Council, Mr. Jean-David Levitte, with whom I look forward to renewing warm personal and professional relations, both within the Council as well as outside of it.

I would also like to thank Mr. Annabi for his briefing on the situation in East Timor. We are pleased to see that following the smooth transfer of peacekeeping duties from the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) to the command of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) last month, the security situation has generally continued to improve throughout East Timor.

We are concerned, however, at the recent increase in the number of cross-border incidents along the border with West Timor. This problem should be addressed in the most effective way so as to ensure that it does not deteriorate into a prolonged or recurring security issue between East Timor and Indonesia which might complicate the efforts being made at forging a diplomatic relationship between the two.

Needless to say, East Timor needs to be free from security problems so that it can concentrate on the process of nation-building. The people of East Timor have high expectations from the United Nations presence there, hence the importance for the international community to assist UNTAET in its efforts at rebuilding East Timorese society and rehabilitating the economy and administration, which will require enormous amounts of financial resources.

As a close and concerned neighbour, Malaysia is prepared to assist East Timor in various fields, within its capacity to do so, and is in the process of following up on the understandings reached during the recent successful visit to Malaysia by Mr. Xanana Gusmão.

We continue to be concerned about the presence of refugees in camps, whose dire plight must be addressed as soon as possible so that they can return to their homes and rebuild their shattered lives.

There should be an early reintegration of ex-combatants into society so as to facilitate their contribution to the reconstruction of East Timor. In this regard, the sensitive issue of Falintil will have to be handled with great care. Equally important is the need to intensify efforts at reconciliation among the people of East Timor, which alone can guarantee the peace and stability of East Timor in the long term. East Timor cannot afford to be saddled with security problems indefinitely into the future.

We note that the issue of the timetable for independence is beginning to be addressed by UNTAET,

in full consultation with East Timorese leaders. It is important that this issue be handled carefully so as to ensure that independence, when it comes, will come neither too late nor too early, when the people of East Timor and their leadership are not quite ready to assume the burdens and responsibilities of independence. Learning from the lessons of the decolonization experiences of the past, the important thing for us is to fully and adequately prepare the people and leadership of East Timor for that final stage in the process. In this regard, we wish to stress the paramount importance of building strong democratic structures for the future independent nation of East Timor.

Finally, like others, we would like to commend UNTAET and its head, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, for the outstanding work they have done thus far.

Mr. Ward (Jamaica): My delegation, too, wishes to associate itself with the warm welcome extended to Ambassador Levitte and we look forward to continued good relations with his delegation.

We also wish to thank Mr. Annabi for bringing us up to date on the situation in East Timor. Over the past few months since the adoption of resolution 1272 (1999), the Secretary-General's Special Representative and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) have worked tirelessly in the face of numerous challenges and extremely high expectations to ensure the implementation of resolution 1272 (1999) and to lay the foundation for East Timor's eventual transition into the international community as a viable, democratic and independent country. My delegation wishes to reiterate its full support for the work of UNTAET and we attach particular importance to the full implementation of resolution 1272 (1999). We wish to commend UNTAET for its work as it seeks, in collaboration with the East Timorese people, to lay the foundation for the transition to independence.

At the last briefing, we were informed by Mr. Vieira de Mello that, by the end of February, the transfer of the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) to the United Nations Transitional Administration would be completed. This was on target. INTERFET and UNTAET must be commended for this smooth transition and we are confident that UNTAET will carry forward INTERFET's work in a manner which will continue to focus on the entrenchment of law and order and the restoration of peace and stability in East Timor.

Several positive developments have indeed occurred since we were last briefed. We have noted the establishment of the East Timor postal service in collaboration with the Portuguese postal service and the Universal Postal Union; the approval of regulations for a new border regime; and the approval of regulations for the organization of the courts and public procurement for civil administration. These regulations, we understand, will provide the framework for the future development of East Timor. We would be interested in hearing about continued progress in this regard.

The signing of the agreement with the World Bank is a significant and welcome development. Early implementation of these initiatives and the requisite disbursement of funds are crucial to the process of rebuilding and reconstruction, particularly at the community level. The recent visits of the Secretary-General and President Wahid of Indonesia were also positive developments.

We remain concerned, however, about the pervasive unemployment and the generally precarious economic and social situation in East Timor, which seem to be contributing to some criminal activity. Of grave concern to us also are the reports of recent incursions, particularly by the militia. These incidents can only serve to undermine the generally stable situation. UNTAET must continue to maintain a firm security presence throughout East Timor. We note the efforts of UNTAET, in collaboration with the Indonesian authorities, in dealing with this matter. In no way must these incursions or incidents of violence be allowed to derail the process in East Timor. We hope that the steadily increasing numbers of civilian police and the strengthening of the rapid-reaction unit will greatly assist in addressing situations such as these and, in general, the maintenance of law and order.

The rate of refugee return has been encouraging. As reported, the rate now stands at over 153,000, with another 50,000 indicating their desire to return. This indicates that there is a greater level of confidence among the East Timorese people regarding the situation there. We are concerned, however, about the continued activities of militia groups aimed at frustrating the process and we urge the Indonesian Government to take whatever action is necessary to remedy this situation. We also strongly urge flexibility to the Government of Indonesia with regard to the deadline for the return of the refugees.

The long-term sustainable development of East Timor must continue to be given priority attention. In this regard, the international community must continue to focus its attention on capacity- and institution-building. It is critical that efficient systems of governance and public administration be established, which would allow for a smooth and eventual transition from UNTAET to local governance. Although it is early in the process, we believe that attention must be given to this from the very outset. In this regard, we note UNTAET's close involvement with the National Consultative Council (NCC). We realize that this has set the stage for the broad-based participation of various groups in East Timor. It is encouraging that the NCC has been promoting transparency and visibility in its work. This is evidenced by the recent participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society in the 8th meeting of the NCC. This, we are confident, will create a sense of ownership and a spirit of reconciliation among the East Timorese people. My delegation firmly believes that if a spirit of confidence, reconciliation and cooperation is fostered among the East Timorese, significant progress will continue to be made.

Finally, we are fully cognizant of the will of the Government of Indonesia to bring to justice the perpetrators of gross human rights violations in East Timor. In this regard, we note the invitation to three respected Indonesian human rights groups to join investigators in probing the violations in East Timor. It is our hope that the ultimate aim of meting out justice to those responsible for these violations will be achieved.

Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi (Namibia): When you, Sir, welcomed the new Permanent Representative of France, Ambassador Levitte, to the United Nations, I know that you did so on our behalf. However, Ambassador Levitte having served on the Contact Group for Namibia during those years which many members remember — a Group which has worked very hard for the implementation of resolution 435 (1978) — and today being the tenth anniversary of Namibia's independence, I just thought that I should take a moment to welcome Ambassador Levitte wholeheartedly to the United Nations and to say that we in the Namibian delegation look forward to continuing to work with him and his entire delegation at this level.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank Mr. Annabi for the update he has given us on the situation in East Timor, and to commend Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello and his team for the good work they are doing.

We are satisfied with the progress in the deployment of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), although, as previous speakers have noted, there clearly remain certain areas of concern, such as the availability of civilian police. In this regard, we call for generous contributions to the Trust Fund, and would like to take this opportunity to thank all those that have already contributed. The slow pace at which funds for reconstruction and development are becoming available is also of concern to our delegation. We trust that these matters will gradually be addressed soon so as to ensure that the socio-economic situation in East Timor does not deteriorate further.

We welcome the recent visit of President Wahid to East Timor. We believe that his visit as well as the apology to East Timor for the violence during Indonesia's occupation are significant acts to enhance reconciliation between the two countries. In our view, this remains one of the most crucial elements for good future cooperation between the two States. Similarly, the continuing meetings between East Timorese and militia leaders serve as a vital mechanism for confidence-building and reconciliation among East Timorese themselves.

We remain concerned about the rising incidence of cross-border attacks by militias against East Timorese and against United Nations personnel. These acts seriously compromise the security of East Timor and we think that they need to be addressed soon. We welcome, however, the undertaking by the Indonesian Government to clamp down on militia activities in West Timor, and we urge them to continue to do so.

Finally, my delegation notes that the repatriation of refugees from camps in West Timor continues, and we hope that the pace of repatriation will pick up further.

The President: On behalf of the Council, let me take this opportunity to convey to the representative of Namibia our greetings and congratulations on the tenth anniversary of Namibia's independence.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (spoke in French): I wish first to associate myself with the words of welcome addressed to Ambassador Levitte; my delegation and I look forward to cooperating with him in continuing the excellent relationship between our two Missions, which mirrors that between our two countries.

I thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this briefing. My thanks go also to Mr. Annabi for the

information he has provided, enabling us to make an up-to-date assessment of the situation in East Timor. I have a few comments to make on key issues about which Mr. Annabi spoke.

On the security situation, we are pleased at the notable progress that Mr. Annabi described. Yet is there not a problem with the staffing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET)? Could Mr. Annabi address this question, and tell us whether the personnel may be too numerous given the present situation?

I believe that the return of refugees is the most important of the political and practical issues on the ground. In our view, the United Nations and the international community should continue to make this a priority. We reaffirm our support for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and for other organizations working in the field to help the refugees return in safety and dignity. Mr. Annabi noted that some 100,000 people remain in West Timor. We would be glad to hear some further information about the activities of the joint border commission.

On the reconciliation process, let me recall that such a process is fundamental to the creation of the stability required for sustainable development. That is why we welcomed the establishment of the National Consultative Council, which we see as an essential instrument for true participation by the people of East Timor in decision-making and in strengthening the independence process. We would be very interested to hear from Mr. Annabi an initial assessment of the roundtables intended to promote national reconciliation.

Turning to reconstruction, the Tokyo donors conference was an important event in that sphere. We welcome the substantial pledges that were announced, and — along with Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, who addressed the Council some weeks ago — we hope that they will be fulfilled as soon as possible. I mention this also to show that the example of East Timor has shown that the search for solutions to issues of reconstruction can be based on close coordinated cooperation among financial institutions, the United Nations and the people concerned, in this instance the people of East Timor. This is something we welcome.

Let me conclude by thanking the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Mr. Sergio Vieira de

Mello, as well as all the others who are participating in the restoration of peace and in post-conflict reconstruction in East Timor.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Bangladesh.

I shall raise six points for Mr. Annabi. The first relates to the deployment of the civilian police. We are very happy that the deployment has picked up; we now have 933 civilian police deployed there. That is an improvement, and we welcome the faster deployment. But we believe that we should also try to look into the deployment process and see how best we can effect a speedier deployment of the civilian police. I say this also in a general context, because we face the same situation in Kosovo.

The second point relates to the violence led by militias. As many members of the Council have mentioned, we are seriously concerned about that, and we believe in this regard that proactive efforts should be made to stop such militia activities. I think that the closing down of camps in those areas is a good way to start.

The third point relates to the development scenario. This is an area of close interest to Bangladesh. We believe that some positive measures are being taken in this regard. We were very happy to hear about the community empowerment projects of the World Bank, about which Mr. Annabi reported to us. We believe that we will have an opportunity to assess their impact on the local population. The Quick Impact Projects, which have been funded by the United Nations Children's Fund and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, bear promise, and we believe that they need to be encouraged by our side. We also believe that the revenue situation is likely to improve with the setting up of the customs and taxation system. Perhaps on a future occasion the Council will have a report on this aspect from the Secretariat.

Another matter related to the development projects is, as many have mentioned, the slow disbursement of funds. As we mentioned last time, we believe that given the size of the commitment that has been made to development in Timor, it would be a pity to see the effort there faltering because of the slow disbursement of funds.

The fourth point relates to the health and education situation in Timor. We believe that these two areas need

special attention. With regard to education, on an earlier occasion we mentioned the need for focusing on the education of girls in the programmes in Timor. We believe this is an important area. We had also recommended that to make the development sustainable in Timor we should focus on the grassroots level through poverty-eradication programmes such as microcredit programmes.

The fifth issue that I would like to raise is the question of national unity and reconciliation. We believe that these are also priority areas in East Timor in the context of the paradigm of nation-building. The recent visit by President Wahid and the militia leaders to East Timor augurs well for the achievement of these objectives. Gradual improvement in the economic and political situation should help in the process.

Finally, with regard to the future political process, we agree that, rather than setting up a time-frame without specific achievements on the ground, it would be better to identify the specific benchmarks to chart the path to independence and then set a time-frame on that basis.

I will stop here and resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Annabi to respond to the comments and to the questions that have been raised.

Mr. Annabi: I think that the first question that was also asked by other Council members related to the slow disbursement of funds from the trust fund. I think that we all agree that the disbursement is much slower than we would all like it to be. The Special Representative has himself voiced his frustration about this and even mentioned to the press that he wished he had a magic wand for turning donor pledges into instant public-works projects. But you need partners, and these things we know take time. You, Sir, mentioned the community-empowerment project of the World Bank. The agreement for this project was only signed at the end of February. So we hope that it will now be implemented promptly. But all of these things we know take time.

The other aspect that is important to keep in mind is that — in view of the level and extent of destruction in the country; in view of the fact that a great number, if not the vast majority, of skilled workers left following the tragic events of last year — rehabilitation, reconstruction and capacity-building is going to be a rather difficult process, certainly one that will be slower than we would all like it to be.

Finally, the UNTAET trust fund is itself of course dedicated to paying mainly — not only, but in large part — for recurrent costs; in other words, for East Timorese civil servants, who are now being recruited. As I mentioned, a total of 2,500 of them are now working and being paid. That number should grow to 7,000 in the course of this year. And as the civil service grows, that will help to accelerate the disbursement of funds in that regard.

I have also mentioned the start of Quick Impact Projects. Again, partners are being identified to develop additional Quick Impact Projects, and as those come on line, I hope that the disbursement process will accelerate. I must mention in this regard that the Controller has been supportive in terms of facilitating the utilization of the funds. As projects are identified and can be initiated, the funds will be disbursed.

There were several questions regarding the return of refugees. The rough estimate at this time is that there are about 100,000 left. UNHCR is currently carrying out a census, which is almost complete. I expect, from what my UNHCR colleagues tell me, that the census will confirm that about half of these 100,000 — namely about 50,000 — wish to return to East Timor.

UNHCR and UNTAET also believe that of course there will have to be flexibility regarding these end-of-March deadlines. There will have to be flexibility for those who will need to go back to East Timor. The recent flow has not been very strong because there are a number of concerns which are still out there among those who may wish to return. These include concerns about possible pensions, which are being discussed by UNTAET with the authorities in Jakarta, and perhaps potential returnees have apprehensions as to how they might be treated. I think that some of the cross-border visits that have taken place will facilitate this process. But there will also have to be flexibility, I think, regarding the resettlement of those who do not wish to come back to East Timor and will have to be resettled either in West Timor or in other parts of Indonesia. The focus, we feel, should of course be on giving an opportunity to all of these people to determine freely where they want to go and settle and rebuild their lives.

Questions have been raised regarding the commitment of the Indonesian authorities to facilitating the return of the refugees. I think it is very clear in UNTAET's mind and in our mind that the Government of President Wahid is genuine in its assurances and in its

desire to cooperate to resolve these problems. There are, however, as I indicated, elements of the Indonesia armed forces (TNI) on the ground who continue to stand in the way of the implementation of these assurances and who may have their own agenda or may be attempting to embarrass or create difficulties for the President. But we have no doubt that the President of Indonesia and the Government of Indonesia are determined to cooperate in resolving this problem. It is a question of translating these commitments into action on the ground and convincing those on the ground who are still opposed to the resolution of this problem to cooperate or, somehow, having them removed.

Did the returns accelerate? I think the answer is that they have not accelerated recently. There is a continuing trickle, but we have not seen any recent acceleration.

There was a question about the National Consultative Council — whether it meets regularly and how it functions. I think it has been a very useful mechanism for the Special Representative, enabling him to consult the East Timorese — not only the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT), which is itself an umbrella organization and includes a number of different parties, but also some of the pro-autonomy groups that have joined the National Consultative Council.

The Council meets on a regular basis and it is consulted systematically by the Special Representative on all the regulations and all the important initiatives that UNTAET takes. It is consulted on the recruitment of civil servants. Mr. Vieira de Mello has rightly made it clear from the outset that our mandate is to set up an interim administration, but that this must be done for the Timorese and in cooperation with them, since our mandate is to help them prepare for and achieve independence. So the mechanism of the National Consultative Council has been extremely useful in maintaining close consultation and cooperation with all the Timorese.

As I said, two of the three pro-autonomy groups have joined the National Consultative Council. One of them still has not. It has agreed to do so in principle, but that raises some sensitive issues, which are still being discussed, as to who the actual representatives might be.

What are the prospects for income generation and the long-term development prospects for East Timor? I think we have to admit that it is a little early in this exercise to be able to make precise forecasts. It is going to be a slow and difficult process — let us not hide from that reality.

The level of destruction has been such that reconstruction, both physically and in terms of capacity-building and the training of cadres and competent civil servants, will be a long-term process. It is not something that UNTAET as such has the resources or capacity to resolve. It requires the long-term, continuing commitment of the international community, which is, of course, investing a lot in UNTAET, but which must sustain that investment to enable East Timor to become independent and engage in a self-sustaining development process in the long term.

On the issue of joint observation at the border, a mechanism is, in fact, in place. I observed it myself, when I was there at the end of last year. We have military liaison officers who are located on the other side of the border, in West Timor, with their counterparts from the various TNI units, to facilitate liaison and cooperation between them and UNTAET and to avoid incidents or resolve incidents where they occur. There are, of course, continuing meetings between the Force Commander and his staff and General Syahnakri, who is the Indonesian Major-General in charge of that area. The last such meeting was held on 15 March, at which they discussed the possible updating of the memorandum on border cooperation arrangements to help resolve some of the problems there.

As regards the future of the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor (Falintil), this is again a rather sensitive issue for the Timorese, and for the Falintil members themselves, who have certain views about what they believe they have done on behalf of East Timor. Consultations have begun between the Special Representative and the CNRT on this. As the Council knows, their numbers are not all that big — there are somewhere between 800 and 1,000 of them. Some of them, we are quite sure, will want to return to civilian life; others could possibly join the future police or security forces. These are some of the issues that are being discussed. We have all said that we hope that East Timor will decide not to have an army, but, in addition to a police force, it may need a gendarmerie-type security force, or some other force of that kind, to ensure security in the territory.

How can we convince the diaspora to return and join the rehabilitation and reconstruction process in East Timor? This is an issue that is also being discussed with the East Timorese, to encourage them to return. This was raised in Jakarta by the Special Representative, and he has received assurances that some of the East Timorese

who have been studying at Indonesian universities would be allowed or encouraged to come back if they so wished, to join in the development process. I understand, too, that the International Organization for Migration is implementing a programme to encourage the return of possibly up to 300 East Timorese from the diaspora, who would take up professional positions in East Timor. Of course, we must also remember that those who have been living abroad may be living comfortably and may not be entirely happy with the level of remuneration that can be offered under present conditions in East Timor. This is certainly an issue on which we should all try to move forward.

What efforts can be made to create a private sector? Again, I think this is something that will take time. It is linked to the overall process of reconstruction, which, as I said, is starting from a very low point, since just about everything has been destroyed — it is amazing to see. This will involve generating a capacity and the development of private entrepreneurs. It, too, is something that will take time and is linked to the overall reconstruction process.

What has the attitude of the East Timorese leadership been? I think that I can say, on behalf of the Special Representative, that he is very gratified by the cooperation that has been extended by the East Timorese leadership. He has made a point of working very closely with them, and I think that the level of cooperation has been very good, even if there is frustration, in the sense that they would like the daily lives of their fellow citizens in East Timor to improve more quickly than is actually possible. But I think that generally the cooperation has been very good.

There are a few more questions to answer. Is the force strength of UNTAET too strong? Does UNTAET have too many troops? I do not think so at this point. As I said, we have 7,300 troops deployed right now. In fact, UNTAET would like to receive the additional assets that are missing, especially in view of the concerns that have developed recently in the light of some of the border

incidents. But I can assure members of the Council that once UNTAET is fully deployed, and once the security situation improves, the Secretary-General will not wait very long before he comes back to the Council and suggests a reduction in troop strength as soon as it is doable or feasible from a security point of view.

On the round-table on national reconciliation, yes, there was recently a meeting in Singapore that I think made a good, but perhaps slow, beginning at national reconciliation between various East Timorese groups. This is an ongoing process that can also be encouraged by some of the cross-border visits that are taking place.

Can we speed up the deployment of police? I think it has picked up quite well recently. We will have close to 1,000 by the end of this week, out of a total authorized strength of 1,640. We have more offers than we actually need. In other words, we have over 1,640 offers. We have identified the second special police unit, so it is a question of actually making the arrangements and getting the signal from the countries concerned that these troops have been trained and are ready to move and, of course, ensuring that they can be accommodated properly when they arrive and that they have the wherewithal to function. But we expect that within the next two months we will be fairly close to the full deployment of the police component.

I think that just about covers it.

The President: I thank Mr. Annabi for responding to the questions and for advising us of the additional information he could share on the various issues raised here.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.



Security Council

Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional
4115th Meeting

Tuesday, 21 March 2000, 3 p.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Canada	Mr. Lalani
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Malaysia	Mr. Mohammad Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Oumar
	Namibia	Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Minton

Agenda

The situation in Tajikistan and along the Tajik-Afghan border

Interim report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan (S/2000/214)



The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Tajikistan and along the Tajik-Afghan border

Interim report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan (S/2000/214)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Tajikistan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the interim report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan, document S/2000/214.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. I give him the floor.

Mr. Annabi: The report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan that you just mentioned, Sir, describes developments in Tajikistan since last November.

Apart from the presidential election, which was held on 6 November last year, the key event during the reporting period was the holding of elections to the newly established Assembly of Representatives, the lower house of Parliament, on 27 February. According to the Central Commission on Elections and Referenda, the national elections commission, the ruling People's Democratic Party won a majority of seats, followed by the Communist Party. The Islamic Revival Party won two seats. On 12 March, run-off elections were held in 12 constituencies where no candidate had received the majority of the vote. According to the central electoral Commission, seven were won by the ruling People's Democratic Party and three by candidates running as independents. The results in the remaining two constituencies, both of which are in Gorniy Badakshan in the south-east, have not yet been announced. On 16 March, the central electoral Commission established a special commission to examine the results of the second round of voting in these two constituencies.

As indicated in the Secretary-General's report, the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) jointly monitored the election. The United Nations-OSCE Joint Electoral Observation Mission noted the significance of the inclusion of former warring parties and others in the electoral process and the fact that Tajikistan had held its first-ever multiparty election in an atmosphere free from violence.

The Joint Electoral Observation Mission, however, also pointed out that the electoral legislation had failed to ensure the independence of the election administration commission, and that the transparency of the process did not meet minimum standards. The observers also reported widespread proxy voting and voting without proper identification.

Despite its shortcomings, the parliamentary election is the final act in the transition period foreseen under the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, which was signed by President Rakhmonov and the United Tajik Opposition leader, Mr. Nuri, in June 1997, under the auspices of the United Nations. After years of fighting, this period of transition has been a difficult one, and several serious

crises have occurred along the way. Nevertheless, the Tajik parties managed to overcome the obstacles and to put their country on the path to national reconciliation and peace.

As the Secretary-General states in his report, the successful completion of this transition period marks a significant achievement in which the United Nations and UNMOT have played an important part. At the same time, it must be recognized that much remains to be done to consolidate the process of national reconciliation in Tajikistan. President Rakhmonov, in discussions with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Petrov, confirmed the need to establish a post-conflict peace-building office following the withdrawal of UNMOT upon the expiration of its mandate on 15 May. President Rakhmonov emphasized that the United Nations job-creation projects were an example of how the international community could contribute to peace consolidation, as it had done in the Karategin valley, by shifting attitudes and mentalities from confrontation to reconciliation. President Rakhmonov also stressed the need to reduce the strength of the armed forces through demobilization programmes, which could be supported by the international community through the proposed post-UNMOT presence.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Let me thank the Secretary-General for his interim report to the Security Council on the situation in Tajikistan (S/2000/214), which includes important assessments of developments in that country. We are grateful also to the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Hédi Annabi, for his thorough briefing and his introduction of the report, as well as for his useful comments on the item before us today.

The Russian Federation shares the view that the 27 February 2000 elections to the lower house of the new parliament were in many ways a landmark event, and that the overall assessment of the election campaign is a positive one.

We hear a great deal about the fact that there were a number of violations and shortcomings during the preparation and holding of the elections. Should we turn a blind eye to this? Of course not. We hope that Tajikistan will take note of the recommendations of the international observers and that these will be incorporated into the conduct of the elections to the upper house of the Republic's parliament, which are to take place in a few days' time. But it is not entirely justified to apply high international democratic standards to Tajikistan, which has just emerged from a protracted internal conflict. It is only

natural that there should be some rough edges on the first free multi-party elections ever conducted in a country that is in a period of transition from civil war to national concord. As the saying goes, we must not fail to see the wood for the trees.

Deficiencies in the conduct of the elections should not eclipse the main point: their political significance as an important milestone marking the imminent completion of the implementation of the document signed in Moscow on 27 June 1997: the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan. The very fact that the elections were held is significant. It is a unique achievement that they took place and that the political parties of former belligerents in the inter-Tajik conflict participated in them. This is to the credit not only of the former participants in the armed conflict, but also of the entire international community, which under the auspices of the United Nations has provided dynamic assistance to advance the peace process in Tajikistan.

Nor is there any doubt that the elections were an important step in the democratic development of Tajikistan and in the establishment of civil society in that country. On the whole, the elections unfolded in a free atmosphere, without any serious acts of violence. We take note of the pluralistic nature of the elections, reflected in the participation of six political parties as well as a number of independent candidates. As a result of the elections, a permanent bicameral professional parliament will be established. Nearly all members of parliament have now been replaced, and the percentage of civilian members has grown along with the number of women deputies. In other words, we are quite simply witnessing the progress of Tajikistan towards the formation of a multi-party political system; democratically elected parliamentarians will maintain the momentum.

We believe that Tajikistan has every chance of becoming a positive example of United Nations peacekeeping and conflict resolution. We are convinced that the Organization should continue to provide assistance in the consolidation of peace in Tajikistan. Particularly worthy of support is the idea of establishing in Tajikistan, when the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan has concluded its activities, a United Nations office to help with post-conflict peace-building, with the primary task of coordinating international efforts to revive and develop the economic and social life of Tajikistan.

Mr. Minton (United States of America): My delegation too welcomes the recent parliamentary elections, which were held in Tajikistan in a violence-free environment. We think this is a significant step towards the realization of democracy in that country. These elections were, of course, the first-ever multi-party parliamentary elections in the country, and we recognize that, as such, they constitute a milestone in the implementation of the 1997 Moscow accords that ended Tajikistan's civil war. As has been noted by Mr. Annabi, however, there were some significant shortcomings in the way the process was implemented.

A Joint Electoral Observation Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations reported on these problems during the election period, and I think all observers are aware of them. However, we believe that with serious work by the Government these irregularities can certainly be overcome in future elections as this process proceeds.

Consequently we wish to encourage the Government of Tajikistan to correct these flaws during the 23 March elections to the upper house. At the same time, we believe that the implementation of the election process, as I said, is highly significant, and a good start has been made with this process. We believe that implementation so far should allow Tajikistan to move forward in the future towards a fuller realization of the democratic processes to which its Government has committed the country. We hope that the Government in particular, as this process proceeds, will ensure that all groups within the country feel that they have a voice, as well as a stake, in the political system of the country.

Since the period of transition stipulated in the peace accords will come to an end with these parliamentary elections, we agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that the process which the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) was created to support is now over. Therefore, my delegation believes that UNMOT should be terminated when its mandate expires on 15 May.

At the same time, however, we look forward to hearing from the Secretary-General about follow-on measures that will enable Tajikistan to embark upon post-conflict peace-building. We are fully ready to be supportive of those measures.

As during previous mid-mandate reviews for UNMOT, my delegation could support, as I said, a

presidential statement along the lines proposed by the Russian delegation.

Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi (Namibia): We too would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Tajikistan. We also thank Mr. Annabi for the introductory remarks he has made.

Tajikistan has had its first-ever multi-party elections. We believe that this in itself is a very significant and major achievement. We do take serious note of the content of paragraph 10 of the Secretary-General's report. However, in my delegation's view, the weaknesses in the elections legislation can only be improved and perfected over time, and it is our hope that the Tajik Government will move in this direction.

Democratization is a process; it does not take root with one election, nor with two. It also depends on many other aspects. We are encouraged, however, that despite the obstacles, the Tajik parties have embarked on the path to reconciliation and democracy. We believe that what is very important and crucial at this time is for all of us to nurture this fledgling democracy by providing assistance to the Tajik Government.

In this context, and with regard to the possible role to be played by the United Nations during the post-conflict peace-building and consolidation period, my delegation appreciates the ongoing consultations with the Government of Tajikistan. We look forward to further information from the Secretary-General in this regard.

We further agree with the Secretary-General that the fact that the transition period envisaged in the General Agreement is coming to a close is a significant achievement. We share his assessment regarding the commendable role that the United Nations has played in the third process. Our particular praise also goes to the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) for its instrumental role in ensuring the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement.

Finally, my delegation agrees with the elements of the statement proposed by the Russian delegation.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to join the delegations that have already spoken in thanking Mr. Annabi for his oral briefing and the Secretariat for the report on the situation in Tajikistan.

Stability in Tajikistan is important not only for the Tajik people but also for the whole of the region. We note that in particularly difficult and often dangerous conditions, the United Nations, with the assistance of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), has been able to set Tajikistan on the path of concord and democracy.

Of course, all is not perfect, far from it; much remains to be done. As Mr. Annabi has noted, the legislative elections were marked by incidents, and the reintegration of combatants from the opposition side still requires a great deal of time and effort. However, we should salute the progress that has been made. Tajikistan has had its first-ever multi-party elections, and the great majority of the deputies are newcomers who are not from the military but from professional or political circles. The proportion of women in the new Assembly has risen from 2.5 to 15 per cent. In short, this new parliament could become a driving force in the democratic process.

While these elections represented a major step forward in the implementation of the peace agreement, the military protocol has not been fully implemented, in particular the provisions regarding disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants. Thus we need to persist in the action under way, while adapting it to the new conditions prevailing in Tajikistan. This is why France supports the proposal of the Secretary-General to create a small United Nations office, similar to those that the United Nations established in the Central African Republic and in Guinea-Bissau.

In this context we would be glad to be informed by the Secretariat, at the appropriate moment, about the nature of the discussions with the Tajik authorities regarding the establishment of this office, the modalities for its establishment, the exact mandate it will be given and, in particular, the question of coordination between the United Nations and the OSCE offices in Tajikistan.

Finally, my country fully supports the statement that Russia has proposed for you, Sir, to read following this meeting of the Council.

Let me just add that the transition of the United Nations presence in Tajikistan from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Department of Political Affairs will be another example of a smooth transition, much like what was very recently adopted for the Central African Republic and for Haiti.

Mr. Chen Xu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): To begin we would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report and Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his additional briefing.

The peace process of Tajikistan has yielded significant progress. The United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) has become another success story. This shows that the political will of the parties concerned and the forceful support of the international community are the indispensable prerequisites for any success in peacekeeping operations.

As was pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report, the peace process in Tajikistan has not been a smooth one. During the process there were grave crises. However, the Government and political parties of Tajikistan demonstrated their commitment to the peace agreement, solved their differences through dialogue, overcame many obstacles and eventually embarked on the path towards national reconciliation and democracy. This is particularly precious for the people of Tajikistan, who suffered through many years of war.

The Chinese delegation places great value on the enormous efforts made by the international community in general, and by the United Nations, the Contact Group of Guarantor States and International Organizations and Russia in particular. As the mandate of UNMOT will be expiring soon, we support the Secretary-General in his continued consultations with the Government of Tajikistan aimed at exploring what role the United Nations can play in the process of post-conflict peace-building and consolidation.

Before concluding, the Chinese delegation would like to state that it supports the draft presidential statement proposed by the Russian Federation.

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Argentina welcomes the fact that the situation in Tajikistan is being addressed in the form of a briefing open to interested delegations. We should also like to express our gratitude for the update provided by the Secretariat, in the person of Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi, and for the interim report of the Secretary-General contained in document S/2000/214.

We should like to express particular appreciation for the important work carried out by the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) since its creation in 1994. It is worth noting that, after years of

fighting, the transition period provided for in the General Agreement has been completed, and that the United Nations, in the form of UNMOT, has played an essential role in this process.

The international community has just witnessed the holding of the first multi-party elections in the history of Tajikistan. It is true that those elections were far from exemplary in terms of transparency and legitimacy. However, if this electoral event is viewed in the context of the history of Tajikistan, which has been marked by struggle, grave crises, bans on opposition parties and the absence of minimal political guarantees, the recent parliamentary elections can be interpreted only as an encouraging milestone in that country's path towards democracy.

Argentina believes that the fundamental objective of turning Tajikistan towards national reconciliation and democratization has been achieved, although it also agrees with the Secretary-General's assessment, expressed in paragraph 17 of his interim report, that much remains to be done. For this reason, we share his concern that there are still too many men under arms, and we also hope that the job creation projects for former combatants will receive the requisite international financing.

We endorse the Secretary-General's proposal that, at the end of its mandate on 15 May, UNMOT be replaced by a small office for post-conflict peace-building purposes. We believe that in that way the United Nations presence in Tajikistan will be assured during this new stage of democracy-building.

In conclusion, I should like to say that we, too, support the draft presidential statement proposed by Russia, which has been circulated to the members of the Council.

Mr. Harrison (United Kingdom): My delegation would like to join others in thanking the Secretary-General for his report, and also in thanking Mr. Annabi for his very clear briefing at the beginning of this meeting.

We are pleased that the transition period in Tajikistan is drawing to a close. The main task for us all now is to consolidate the peace and avoid any future breakdown of the arrangements that have been successfully put in place. We are also pleased that the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) has provided critical support to the peace process, and we are pleased that the elections took place successfully, as noted by the Joint Electoral Observation Mission (JEOM). They were the first

multi-party elections to take place in an atmosphere free of violence, which represents a real landmark in the history of Tajikistan. Nevertheless, we are concerned that the elections failed to meet the minimum democratic standards for equal, free, transparent and accountable elections, and we urge the Government, the Parliament and all political forces in Tajikistan to work towards fully fair and free elections in the future.

We also await with interest the outcome of the Secretary-General's consultations with the Government of Tajikistan on a follow-on political presence. We would not wish to prejudge the results of these discussions, but we do support the Secretary-General's conclusion that it is important for the international community to remain engaged in Tajikistan.

Mr. Ward (Jamaica): We join in thanking the Secretary-General for his interim report, and Mr. Annabi for his briefing.

My delegation welcomes the recent holding of parliamentary elections in Tajikistan, as this represents an important step in the democratization process. The resolution of the conflict and the establishment of peace in Tajikistan constitute an important step towards stability in Central Asia. The inclusion of the different parties in the election process signals the commitment of the people and the Government of Tajikistan to the creation of a multi-party democracy.

We note that the electoral process was not without problems. The report of the Secretary-General points to a number of shortcomings in the electoral law and process, and we hope that steps can be taken to correct these inadequacies. We recognize the need to make allowances for the transitional process that has taken place in Tajikistan. Improvements in the electoral process should be undertaken as a matter of priority. It is important that the electoral process be one of legitimacy and integrity in order to secure peace and security for the people of Tajikistan. Existing political institutions must be strengthened to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the important task of governing, with the support of the Tajik people.

We commend the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) for the success that it has achieved in implementing its mandate, in accordance with the provisions of the 1997 General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan. My delegation also wishes to acknowledge the

contribution made by UNMOT and the United Nations/Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Joint Electoral Observer Mission in the recent elections, and we hope that their findings can be taken into account as we work towards a more transparent electoral process. My delegation looks forward to the holding of elections for the upper house, scheduled for Thursday, 23 March.

We need to move quickly to cement the gains made in the peace process and to foster greater democracy in the region. The Secretary-General has advised us of his intention to withdraw UNMOT when its mandate expires on 15 May. In the light of the positive developments in Tajikistan, therefore, we must now turn our attention to the future role of the United Nations. We agree that there is still much to be done.

A change in the role of the United Nations is inevitable, as we seek to move towards peace-building. We support the intention of the Secretary-General to consult with Tajikistan in that regard. A peace-building United Nations mission after the withdrawal of UNMOT is essential, in order to prevent a return to conditions which foster conflict and to facilitate national reconciliation and the creation of a sustainable system of government.

We look forward to working with all concerned towards a peace-building agenda for Tajikistan, one that includes all the factors we have outlined, as we build on the work done to bring lasting peace and security to the people of Tajikistan.

Finally, we support the elements of the presidential statement proposed by the Russian Federation.

Mr. Mohammad Kamal (Malaysia): Like speakers before me, I too would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his briefing, and to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his interim report, which we have before us.

We are indeed pleased with the significant progress in the peace process in Tajikistan. To put it briefly, the Tajik peace process is increasingly being recognized as one of the success stories that this Organization is associated with. The United Nations has played a crucial role in that process through the deployment of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and the active involvement of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative. The constructive role of the Contact Group of Guarantor States and International Organizations, which

includes the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, is similarly instrumental to that success. We commend them all for their efforts. But most importantly, all parties in Tajikistan — the Government, other political forces and the people alike — must be congratulated on their commitment and determination to achieve peace and promote national reconciliation after the devastating civil war in that country.

The holding of the first multi-party parliamentary elections last month, in an atmosphere free of violence, was another important step forward towards establishing lasting peace and stability in Tajikistan. That election, despite the noted shortcomings, was crucial as the beginning of democratic development in the country. By the same token, it will be crucial for similar differences to be addressed and avoided in the future.

We agree with the Secretary-General's observation in his report that there are still too many men under arms, and we fully support the efforts to encourage them to return to civilian life.

We strongly urge the Government and all political forces in Tajikistan to strengthen and consolidate the achievements that have been made so far, and to continue such efforts beyond the transition period envisaged in the General Agreement so that the peace process will be irreversible.

At the same time, we also believe that the international community, and particularly the United Nations, should remain engaged in Tajikistan, especially in providing comprehensive assistance for the social, economic and democratic reforms. In this regard, we look forward to details of the Secretary-General's proposal on the possible role of the Organization following the closure of the present United Nations peacekeeping Mission, UNMOT, in May.

In conclusion, we also wish to express our support for the draft presidential statement on Tajikistan that is before us. In this regard, we wish to thank the Russian delegation for its initiative.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I would first of all like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for his introduction of the report of the Secretary-General. We thank him for the information he gave us and for making himself available to the Council.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to welcome our new colleague, Ambassador Jean-David Levitte, who is an eminent diplomat and friend with whom I had the privilege to work in Tunis and in Paris, where I was able to appreciate his great human and professional qualities. I would like to assure him of our full readiness to continue to work with him and his delegation, as we did with his predecessor, Ambassador Dejammet.

Tunisia has taken note of the holding of the first pluralistic and democratic elections in Tajikistan. We salute the role played in this regard by the Joint Electoral Observation Mission of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. As the Secretary-General stressed in his report, and as the recent elections have shown, the transition to a stable democratic regime has barely begun. It is important in this connection for the international community to continue to lend the necessary assistance to guarantee the continuity of the democratic process in that country. Some sort of ongoing United Nations presence will make it possible to preserve the gains made and to consolidate the process of national reconciliation in Tajikistan. Despite the difficulties and tensions that have accompanied the entire transition period, the United Nations, the Contact Group and other actors have constantly promoted and helped the Tajik parties overcome obstacles in order to enable their country to embark upon the path of reconciliation and democracy.

Tunisia would like to express its satisfaction with the role played by the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), and with the goodwill of all the parties near and far that have participated in helping make the Mission a success. My country agrees with the decision of the Secretary-General to terminate the United Nations Mission in Tajikistan. Tajikistan must shoulder its responsibilities, with the assistance of the international community, and the international community should closely follow the evolution of the situation on the ground in order to guarantee the establishment of lasting stability and democracy.

The role of the United Nations in the post-UNMOT period will continue to be very important, particularly as long as the United Nations continues to assist Tajikistan in all aspects of peace-building, especially in the reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life and in income-generating activities that are of economic and social benefit. We encourage the authorities of Tajikistan to continue consultations with the United Nations to define the role that can be played by the Organization in future stages to consolidate peace in Tajikistan.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): Since I did not participate in the discussion during the morning meeting, I would also like to join my colleagues who extended their warm welcome to Ambassador Levitte of France. We wish him every success in all his endeavours at the United Nations in the years to come.

I would like to thank Mr. Annabi for the briefing on the latest developments in Tajikistan, and to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his interim report. We also welcome the participation in our meeting of Ambassador Alimov of Tajikistan.

The recent parliamentary elections in Tajikistan have become a crucial event in the life of that country and therefore deserve the full attention of the Security Council. Those elections mark the last major step in the transitional period outlined in the June 1997 General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, which was signed between the Government of Tajikistan and the United Tajik Opposition (UTO). Those elections draw a line under one of the most difficult conflicts in the territories of the newly independent States that re-emerged on the world political map. After long years of fighting, the Tajik parties managed to come to a peaceful solution and to eventual reconciliation.

Peaceful reconciliation became possible thanks to the political will and tireless and persistent efforts of the Tajik parties themselves, the President of Tajikistan, friendly neighbouring countries and the entire international community, in particular the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The parliamentary elections — the first multi-party ones in the history of the country — were held on the basis of the new law adopted following the national referendum in September 1999.

As outlined in the joint statement issued by the OSCE and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIR) on the parliamentary elections in Tajikistan, the most significant accomplishment of this peace-building step was the inclusion of the former warring parties and others in the electoral process. It is noteworthy that for the first time the military opposition, which had relied on its military force, chose to say farewell to arms and to seek by political means its place in civil society and in the power structures.

In our view, this remarkable decision attests to the fact that Tajik society has taken the road to democracy and should be regarded as a solid basis for the further development of the society. It would be no exaggeration to say that this is an significant event that will have a positive impact on the security environment of the entire region of Central Asia.

It should be noted that the international community has taken a significant interest in this event. The United Nations and OSCE Joint Electoral Observation Mission to Tajikistan provided more than 80 observers, who visited some 300 polling stations across Tajikistan. We are fully aware of the critical assessments regarding certain shortcomings observed by the international monitors during the elections. However, we should bear in mind the fact that these took place in a country which went through years of armed conflict and is now taking its first steps on the road towards democracy. We have no doubt that those findings will be taken seriously by the leadership of the Republic of Tajikistan.

As the Secretary-General rightly noted in paragraph 17 of his report (S/2000/214), "the move towards a stable democracy has only just begun". It is of crucial importance that the international community continue to support Tajikistan. Ukraine, as a country with longstanding traditions of friendship with Tajikistan, will actively participate in this process.

We also deem it essential that a United Nations post-conflict peace-building office be established in Tajikistan. We would like to commend the men and women of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) staff for their dedicated work during the course of this year, sometimes under extremely difficult conditions, which ensured the successful implementation of the task entrusted to them by the international community. We are proud of the fact that Ukrainian nationals have made a concrete contribution to the work of the Mission.

Finally, we support the draft presidential statement proposed by the delegation of the Russian Federation and negotiated today.

Mr. Hamer (Netherlands): I too thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his introduction of the Secretary-General's report and for the additional information he has provided.

Although the overall progress in the peace process is encouraging, my delegation agrees with the Secretary-

General's conclusion that the move towards a stable democracy has only just begun. While the holding of the presidential and parliamentary elections was a significant step in the development of democratic institutions, the elections themselves were marred by significant flaws.

The presidential elections last November were not monitored by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), because they failed to meet the standards set by that organization. The parliamentary elections on 27 February were the country's first multi-party elections, but serious shortcomings in those elections have led the Joint Electoral Observation Mission to express serious doubts concerning the integrity of the election results.

Despite these undeniable shortcomings, the trend over the past few months has been encouraging. It is precisely because much remains to be done in the way of further democratization that the international community must remain engaged in that process. That is why the Netherlands fully endorses the Secretary-General's proposal concerning a further role for the United Nations in Tajikistan after the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT).

Finally, we call on the Tajik authorities to ensure that the forthcoming elections to the National Assembly proceed in a free, fair and transparent manner.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Bangladesh.

My delegation would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his briefing and his introduction of the interim report of the Secretary-General.

The holding of parliamentary elections on 27 February was a significant step forward for Tajikistan, though there were a number of areas in which the electoral process did not meet with the full satisfaction of the international community. In considering the outcome, a number of points must be borne in mind.

First, this was the first multi-party, pluralistic election in Tajikistan, and it included participation by former warring parties. Secondly, the voter turnout was very good — 93 per cent. And thirdly, the fact that the elections were held without any violent incidents halting the process was itself a success.

The deficiencies in the electoral process were not entirely unexpected. The Joint Electoral Observation Mission of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) was deployed despite shortcomings in the electoral laws. It was present not only to observe the process, but also to offer constructive engagement. The country has emerged from a prolonged and difficult conflict situation, and we consider these elections as a building-block phase in the peace process and the development of democracy in the country.

The holding of elections, even if flawless, cannot guarantee the consolidation of democracy. The elections were only a starting point in a long journey in the quest for national reconciliation and democratic institution-building. The process could be disrupted if not properly nurtured. The Government of Tajikistan and the international community should focus on carrying this process forward.

With regard to the reintegration of opposition fighters, let me say that in order to consolidate the peace process, the reintegration of ex-combatants into society should be given a high priority. It cannot be viewed as a sequential event which will follow their disarmament. The two processes are intertwined. The positive results achieved in the reintegration of the former fighters into society will mobilize those still holding on to weapons and encourage them to surrender those arms.

The Secretary-General's report notes that in Tajikistan there are still too many men under arms. They should be offered meaningful and productive economic opportunities. Otherwise, the ex-combatants, with their illegal arms, will be a threat to the peace and security of society.

More projects geared to job creation should be undertaken, and funding should be made available for them. The only such project, in the Karategin Valley, was interrupted by the onset of winter. It should receive more attention and be resumed soon.

Finally, on the way ahead, the international community has a responsibility to see that the gains achieved in Tajikistan are not lost and that interest does not wane after the acute phase of the conflict is over. The world community should come forward and provide assistance to help this fledgling democracy take root and to create opportunities for the people to see hope in their future.

We have noted from the Secretary-General's report that he will be consulting the Tajik Government about the

possible role of the United Nations in post-conflict peace-building and will inform the Council about the outcome of his consultations. It might be worthwhile for the Council to consider some viable and convincing options for the future involvement of the United Nations in Tajikistan.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The representative of Tajikistan has asked for the floor, and I now call on him.

Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to take this opportunity first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your exercise of your very important duties as President of the Security Council for March and to sincerely wish you every success in your difficult and very responsible job.

Allow me also to express gratitude for the important proposals and comments made during this exchange of views on the report submitted by the Secretary-General under this agenda item on the situation in Tajikistan. Every comment and proposal made here is of great value to us and my Government will certainly study them with care.

Since the submission in November 1999 of the previous report of the Secretary-General on Tajikistan, major political events have taken place in Tajik society. Decisive steps have been taken to consolidate all the achievements made during the almost three-year peace process in my country. For the first time in the history of newly independent Tajikistan, pluralistic, multiparty elections were held. For us, this was not just another routine election campaign. The elections were a very serious test of the strength of the peace process unfolding under United Nations auspices and brought it to the conclusion envisaged in the General Agreement signed in Moscow in June 1997.

This was a very serious, qualitatively new step towards the further democratization of our society. We can say in all certainty that this democratic breakthrough was truly won by the suffering of the people of Tajikistan. For the first time in the country's history, six political parties took part in the establishment of the representative organs through elections and every mandate in the various constituencies was contested, on average, by five candidates; in some, there were as many

as 10. All of this took place not long after the recent civil conflict in my country.

Preparations for and the holding of the elections in a free, democratic atmosphere were not a victory solely for our burgeoning Tajik democracy as a whole. We may candidly and, in our opinion, must attribute it to each individual participant in this process, from the rank-and-file voter to the political parties and movements. It is important to note that the elections took place in accordance with the law, reflecting the current state of Tajik society. This law was adopted on the basis of the amendments to the country's Constitution endorsed in the course of the popular referendum.

We consider the main achievement of the elections to be the fact that the Tajik people themselves decided the direction our society should take in the twenty-first century. This direction can be characterized by the following central points.

Tajikistan is resolutely moving towards the development of a democratic, secular and pluralistic society that respects the views of the people and observes fundamental human rights and freedoms. To use the image cited by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, the outcome of the parliamentary elections has cemented the achievements of the peace process and laid solid foundations for the sustainable development of the country.

We are grateful to the Security Council, the Secretary-General, his Special Representative, the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and the Contact Group of Guarantor States and International Organizations for the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan for their constant attention to our problems, assistance and support, which we have appreciated, appreciate and, I am sure, will continue to appreciate in the future.

Tajikistan now has special need of all kinds of international support. We have reason to hope that this support will grow. This hope is bolstered by the concerned and active work being undertaken in our country by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and many other specialized agencies of the United Nations.

Moreover, the country's transition to the peaceful path of development and the socio-economic reforms being

carried out by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan are gradually leading to increased confidence in us on the part of investors, who are devoting growing attention to the opportunities offered them by participation in the revival and development of our country.

We believe that the Secretary-General will soon submit recommendations on the new role of the United Nations in Tajikistan once UNMOT fulfils its mandate. The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan is prepared to continue to cooperate with the United Nations on the basis and in development of the joint experience we have gained in leading the country out of a most difficult internal conflict. We feel that this experience deserves a thorough analysis and assimilation. It should help enhance the United Nations authority and serve the interests of all its States Members. We hope that we still have some time to address this question very seriously.

Right now, it is important to identify in a precise and balanced manner the United Nations tasks at this new phase in the development of the situation in Tajikistan. It is important to bear in mind the depth of the respect of the Tajik people for the people in blue helmets and to plan United Nations activities so as to further deepen that respect.

We believe that the Secretary-General, in preparing his proposals, will base himself on the real needs of our country, whose peace and stability can best be consolidated by helping to revive and develop the socio-economic sphere.

The President: I thank the representative of Tajikistan for his kind words addressed to me.

I now give the floor to Mr. Annabi to comment on the statements made so far.

Mr. Annabi: There is not much to add. Perhaps I could simply add that the Special Representative, together with colleagues from the Department of Political Affairs, met yesterday with President Rakhmonov to discuss the follow-on presence of the United Nations in Tajikistan. During those discussions, the President confirmed his support for this follow-on presence.

The Secretary-General will now be preparing recommendations and precise terms of reference for this follow-on presence, which will be brought to the attention of the Council in due course.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue the consideration of the item on the

agenda will take place immediately following the adjournment of this meeting.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.



Security Council

Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4116th Meeting

Tuesday, 21 March 2000, 4.20 p.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Canada	Mr. Lalani
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Malaysia	Mr. Mohammad Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Oumar
	Namibia	Mr. Theron
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Minton

Agenda

The situation in Tajikistan and along the Tajik-Afghan border

Interim report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan (S/2000/214)



The meeting was called to order at 4.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Tajikistan and along the Tajik-Afghan border

Interim report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan (S/2000/214)

The President: In accordance with the decision taken at the 4115th meeting, I invite the representative of Tajikistan to take a seat at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan of 14 March 2000 (S/2000/214), submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of its resolution 1274 (1999) of 12 November 1999.

"The Security Council welcomes decisive progress in the implementation of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan (S/1997/510) achieved due to sequential and persistent efforts of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan and the leadership of the Commission on National Reconciliation.

"The Security Council welcomes, in particular, the holding on 27 February 2000 of the first multi-

party and pluralistic parliamentary election in Tajikistan, in spite of serious problems and shortcomings, as noted by the Joint Electoral Observation Mission for Tajikistan. It notes that the holding of this election the transition period envisaged in the General Agreement is coming to a close. The Council acknowledges a significant achievement of the Tajik parties, which have managed to overcome many obstacles and to put their country on the path to peace, national reconciliation and democracy. It urges the Government and the Parliament of Tajikistan to work towards elections in the future that meet fully acceptable standards as a means to consolidate peace.

"The Security Council notes with satisfaction that the United Nations has played an important role in this success. It welcomes the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), supported by the Contact Group of Guarantor States and International Organizations, the Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States, being instrumental in assisting the parties in the implementation of the General Agreement.

"The Security Council supports the intention of the Secretary-General to withdraw UNMOT when its mandate expires on 15 May 2000. It expects that the Secretary-General will inform the Council about the outcome of his current consultations with the Government of Tajikistan on a role for the United Nations in the period of post-conflict peace-building and consolidation."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2000/9.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.